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Holt**

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**Jesse Lee  
Denning**

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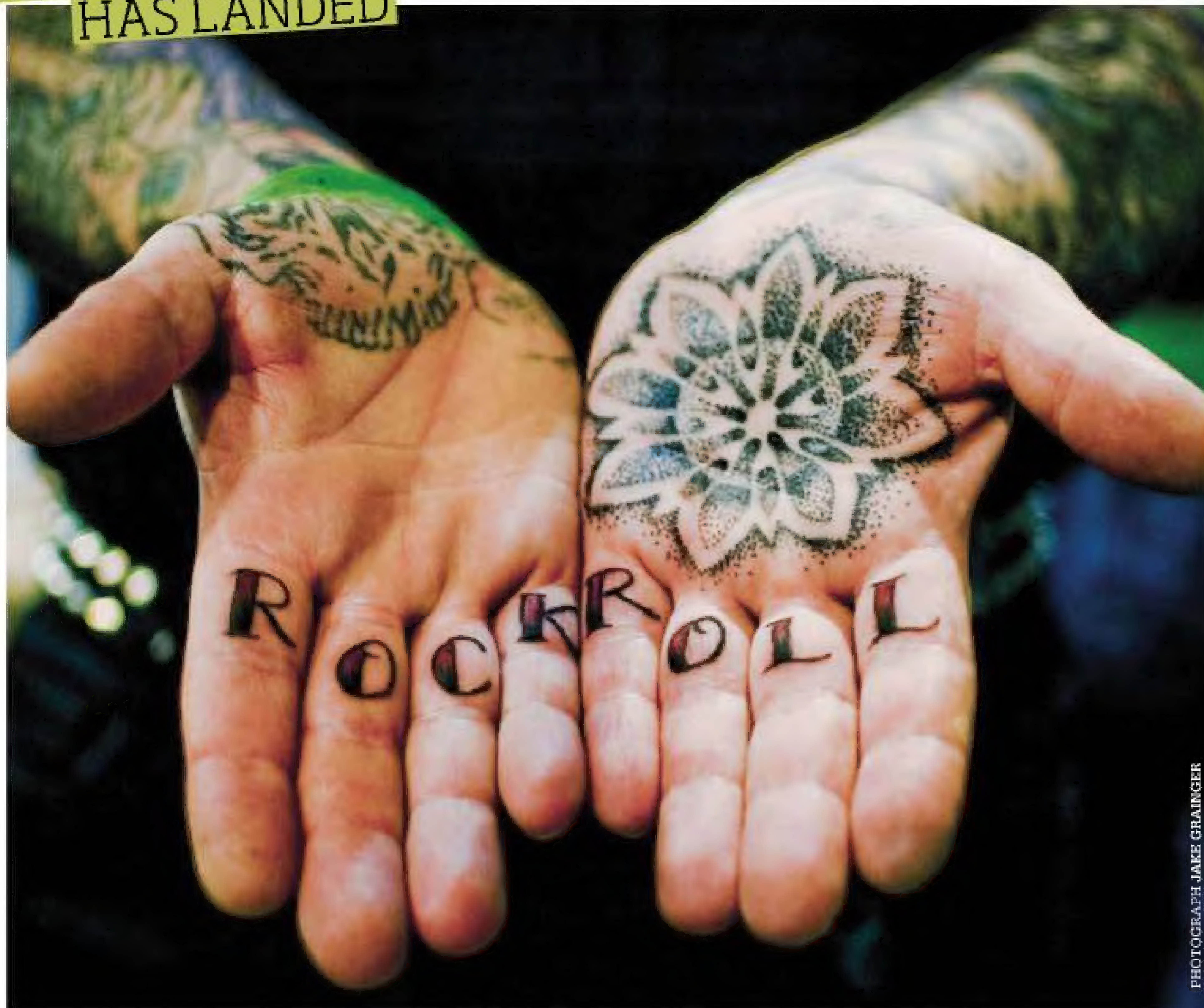
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## THE NEEDLE HAS LANDED



PHOTOGRAPH JAKE GRAINGER

## TELFORD ROCK CITY!

Three luchadores, two hotels and one piano – it could only be Tattoo Freeze. We'll be covering the event in its entirety next issue but it would be remiss of me not to lead in with some comments about it here. With the exception of Buena Vista Tattoo Club who couldn't make it because the lovely Simone was really, *really* sick, everybody made it intact. I don't want to fire all of my guns at once, that can wait for the complete show review next month, but I would like to say – on behalf of all of us – thanks to everybody who came to the event and made it such a success, thanks to the artists who, without exception, all worked themselves into the ground, thanks to the graffiti guys, the traders and last but not least, whoever it was that kept going to the supermarket for supplies. Without you all, it wouldn't have been half the show it was. Roll on The Jam!

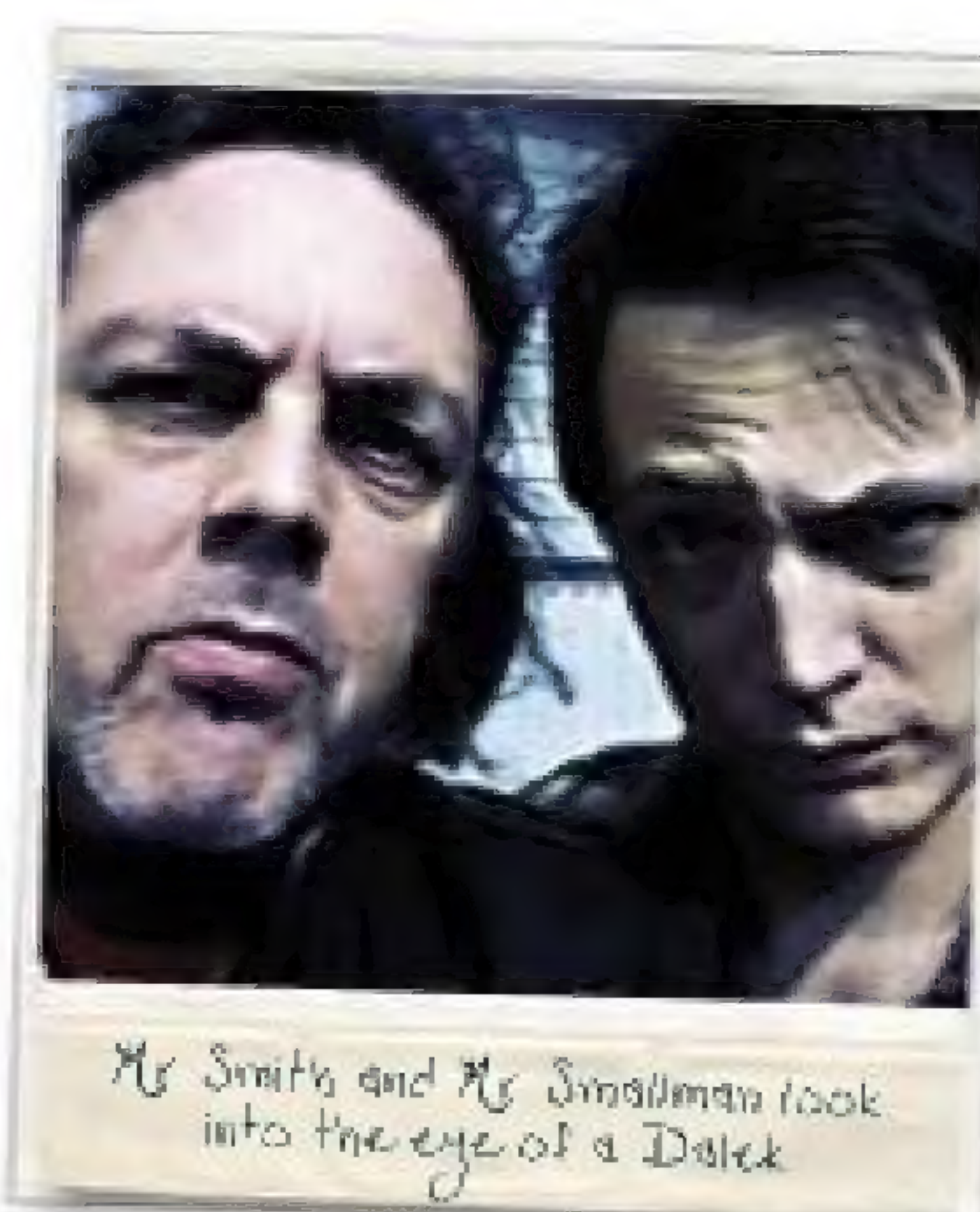
Last issue, we ran a letter from a reader (Gail) about how she and her daughter would like to see/appear in a feature on mothers and daughters, maybe discussing the generation gap and their art. I actually thought this was a pretty good idea and then put it to one side to address the Freeze event. Stone me if I didn't get back to find not one, not two, but three letters all about the same thing prompted by Gail's letter. It's great to see a group of people all wanting the same thing for a positive reason – and if that's what the readers want, that's what the readers will get – stay tuned while we gather our senses and set about it – all in the best possible taste of course! If there's more of you out there with a similar mindset who would like to feature in the article, drop me a line and we'll see what we can come up with. (May the Gods be gentle with me...)

What else has happened while I had my back turned for five minutes? Well, Carly took it upon herself to redesign our little sister magazine Skin Shots – she's looking good too – the mag, not Carly. Hang on – this is one big hole I've started to dig myself now.

Anyway, one of the big things that came about from doing that was how much we rely on tattooists mailing in new discs all the time to put it together – while we obviously still want that (and more of them please – if you've never mailed us with your work, what the hell are you waiting for!), we also want more work from our readers. To accommodate this, we're busy working on an online "mechanism" that will work for both you and us. In a Field of Dreams kind of way, we figured "you build it and they will come". Watch this space as well.

See – I don't spend every single day looking for a Great Dane to hang out with and watch Doctor Who re-runs...

*Den*



Mr Smith and Mr Smallman look into the eye of a Dalek

ISSUE 196 ON SALE  
8TH MARCH 2011



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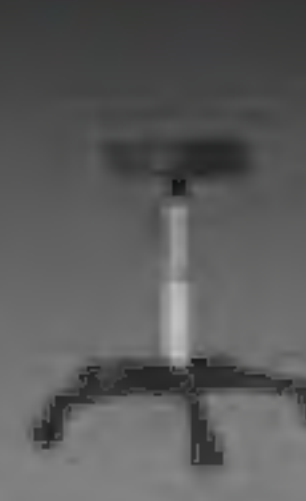


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PAOLA PANICOLA  
PHOTOGRAPHER  
SELF PORTRAIT

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- 52 ..... **PEARL HARBOR GIFTSHOP**  
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- 64 ..... **PHILLIP HOLT**  
Phillip Holt's name has been bandied around here for a while now – so we figured it was about time we investigated just what he was bringing to the table. Sunshine, children and some nifty art – that's what.
- 74 ..... **NOI SIAMESE**  
The award winning Thai artist who makes his home in Norway is also rather well known for being particularly ambitious – so we went to find out why.

## SPECIAL FEATURES

- 12 ..... **PICNIC AT HANGING ROCK**  
The second part of Craigy Lee's trip from one side of Australia to the other – this issue, we find Craigy creating a new type of vehicle art and praying that his mobile wifi holds out for just another 1000km...
- 18 ..... **ALL AMERICAN NIGHTMARE**  
The boss freaked when he got a call from Jesse Lee Denning last month – my, my – how one thing can lead to another! Ten minutes later, Jesse was rustling up her story of what happened when she was asked to film a video clip for one of America's top rock bands.
- 58 ..... **FINDING NEVERLAND**  
A chance conversation led to something rather unusual this issue – we've seen fans sporadically go all out over people they adore before, but to have those people regularly mail you tattoos of your own work is very, very cool. Everybody's favourite fantasy artist Brom shares his secret photo album with us...

## FREE SUPPLEMENT

This month, we're giving away a **SKIN SHOTS SPECIAL**. Whether you're looking for inspiration or are just inspired to look, there's some cracking art kicking about in here!

## NEXT ISSUE

WE'RE BACK HOME AND  
DRY WITH A UK ARTIST SPECIAL!



## CONTRIBUTORS

Jesse Lee Denning, Cindy Frey, Craigy Lee, Simon Lundh, Paula Hardy-Kangelos, Amy Muir, Barbara Pavone, Jim Smallman, Trent Aitken-Smith, Brent Taylor, Rik van Boekel

AGA GOCOLEWSEKA



# FALLOUT

Seen an interesting clipping in the press? Got something that you'd like reviewed or featured? Got some spare chocolate or beer? Send them to: Skin Deep, The Old School, Higher Kinnerton, Chester CH4 9AJ OR EMAIL: [editor@skindeep.co.uk](mailto:editor@skindeep.co.uk)

## BELIEVE THE TYPE!

**Here at Skin Deep, there's nothing we like better than a great piece of art.**

Browsing the web just this week, we found – amongst another 33 – these two incredible pieces of digital art. The whole set of 35 can be viewed over at [www.designm.ag](http://www.designm.ag) (search for 35 Awesome Typographic Portraits) where you can zoom right in on these and see just how much work has gone into them. What we want to know is, just how long will it be before someone in the tattoo world picks up the gauntlet on this pretty intricate style. Any takers – and if so, you know where we are and we want to see it first!



### MOVERS AND SHAKERS



The legend that is Sean Vasquez has finally made his long planned move into the UK and is soon to be opening a new private studio in Hackney, North London. We're real excited about what he has planned – stay tuned for more news on Triple X Tattoo over the coming weeks – here's a preview of the great space he's busy working on making into a very cool place to be! When they're ready, you'll find them at **Triple X Tattoo, Netil House, 1-7 Westgate Street, Studio 206, 2nd Floor, Hackney, London Fields E8 3RL**

## ORIGINAL SIN

**Original Sin is a new, UK based clothing label for people "who think about what they wear."**

Offering up a trend conscious, artist-led range of T-shirts, tops and accessories that express a sense of individuality with soul, Original Sin's look is fearless, one that combines arresting visuals and a dark aesthetic, these are designs that set themselves apart by delivering strong images with brave ideas behind them – and we love what they've got. To check out what they've got on offer, take a trip over to [www.thecultoforiginalsin.com](http://www.thecultoforiginalsin.com).



## SANTA MACABRE

**We recently came across rather a groovy little corner of the world –** Maria over at Santa Macabre makes her own custom made journals and also some very fine jewellery – you can check out the store at [www.santamacabre.bigcartel.com](http://www.santamacabre.bigcartel.com) - if you like what you see, she very kindly handed over three necklaces for us to give away to our readers. Now I have to think of a worthy reason to make it happen – how about this: mail us a good reason for you to have them and they're yours! Well, one each to the first three that make us laugh anyway!







**Nigel Barden** of **Suns & Roses Tattoo Studio**, Northampton, would like to announce he will be acting as host to 13 Ink's Dan Gold. Between the 25th and the 30th of April 2011, folks are able to get the very sought after full attention of Mr Gold. If you would love an appointment with Dan, please contact **Nigel**, on the **Suns & Roses** shop number 01604 949958.



**Anth Edwards** has opened a new studio at 1st Floor, 36 Saturday Market, Beverley, HU17 9AG. To make an appointment give Anth a call on 0773 733 1383 or check out the website at [www.k2bodyart.com](http://www.k2bodyart.com)

**Sacred Fortune** is a new privately run family owned studio in Liverpool. Their address is 51A Allerton Road, Mossley Hill, Liverpool, L18 2DA. You can reach them on 0778 357 5091, look at their work at [www.sacredfortune.com](http://www.sacredfortune.com) and follow them on myspace, facebook and twitter®

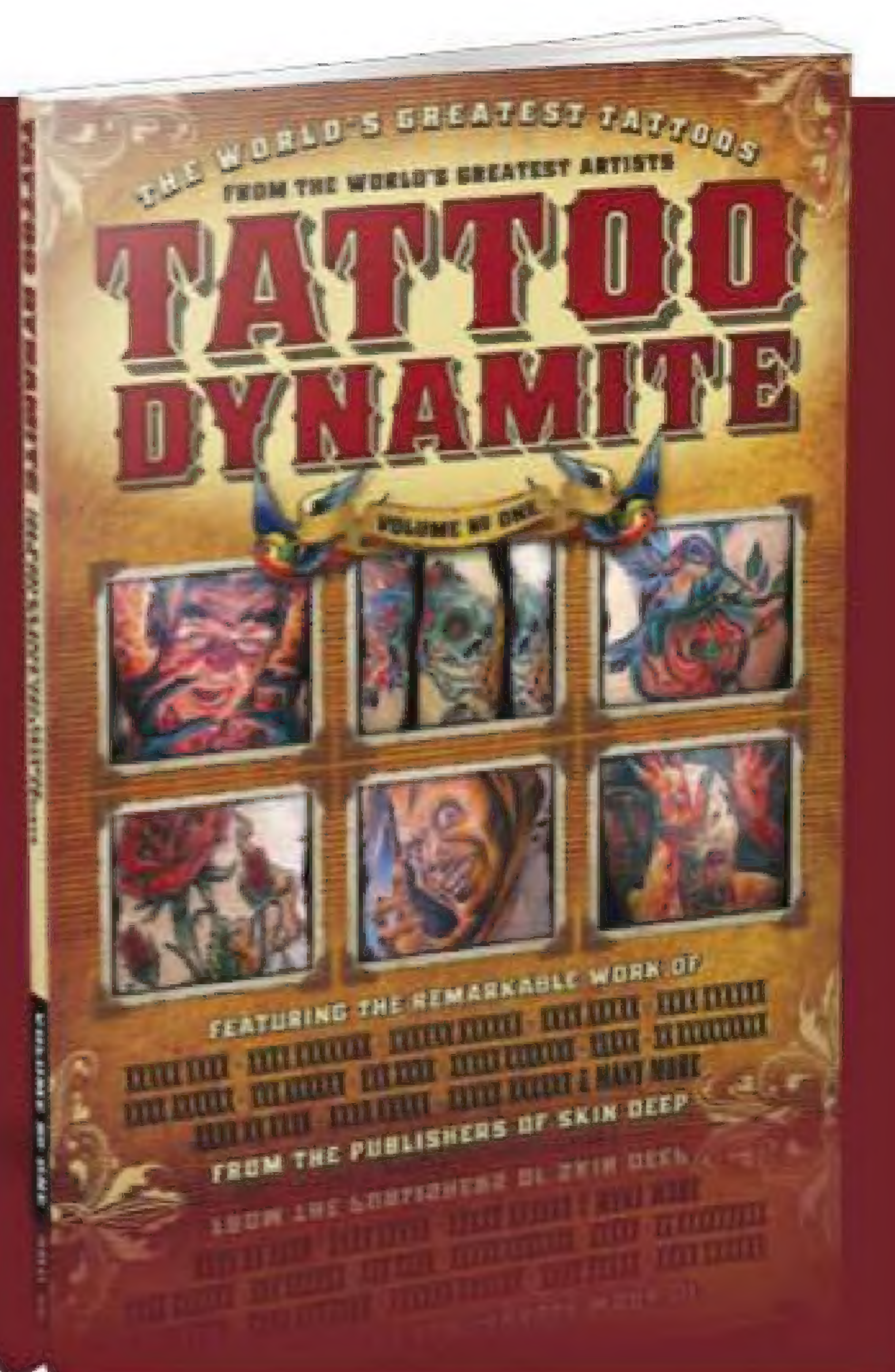
## TATTOO DYNAMITE

Jumping off the back of the best-selling **Tattoo Bible** and **Tattoo Vixens**, we're aiming to have another killer bookazine out on the shelves in early Spring this year – and we need your help! **Tattoo Dynamite** is exactly what it says it is – an international collection of only the best tattoo images that were inked during 2010.

To take part and be in with a shot at having your masterpiece in the book – be you artist or collector – simply get yourself along to [bigtattooplanet.com/dynamite](http://bigtattooplanet.com/dynamite) and upload your work.

There are very simple rules and obviously, we need only the best quality photographs uploaded for this. Our bookazines are making a real name for themselves on the shelf both here and overseas, so what are you waiting for? Bring it!

While we're on the subject of bookazines – for those of you who were liking what we did with **Tattoo Vixens**, don't forget we've now opened **Tattoo Vixens 2** up to our readership with an online competition similar to the recent **Calendar Girls** online comp – you can get into this right now and be in with a chance to flaunt your art in front of thousands, be you pro or amateur model (or even just 'fancy your chances!') at [bigtattooplanet.com/vixens](http://bigtattooplanet.com/vixens)



## MEAD? FOOD OF THE GODS?

Whatever you think of the drink (and personally, we can't get enough of the stuff), this new packaging

(after 50 years of the old style!) from Gendall for the Cornish Mead Company is mighty interesting. We suspect it will be rather a love/hate affair on whether it's a good thing or not, but we love it – it's classy and has had some top research done on it first. Sadly, this story was found rather than their PR company sending us a few bottles to sample. Hint.



**READER GIVEAWAY**

## SMASHED YOUR IPHONE?

Maybe you should have had one of these shatterproof polycarbonate cases wrapped around her – they even have reinforced impact zones!

If it's not too late for you, you can swag yourself one right here – the design choices we have are either **Fuel Girls** or **Motorhead** – there are other alternatives (Jedward, Justin Bieber) but we didn't think you'd be very interested in those so much. First five out of the bag to [editor@skindeep.co.uk](mailto:editor@skindeep.co.uk) get to choose from either design and don't forget to let us know if your on iPhone 3 or 4 (they are different). Get it on...



## AN APOLOGY

In our recent coverage of the **Barcelona Convention**, we incorrectly credited the two photos on the right. The correct credit for both should read: On Viviana by Barthez from Forevermore Tattoo, Glasgow. The responsible wrists have been slapped and those responsible have been confined to the kitchen to make hot drinks for three days...





## CONVENTIONS

All details correct at time of going to press.

**FEBRUARY 4 - 6**

**ZARAGOZA TATTOO CONVENTION**

Feria de Zaragoza, Zaragoza, Spain  
[www.zaragozatattooconvention.com](http://www.zaragozatattooconvention.com)

**FEBRUARY 19 - 20**

**LYON TATTOO CONVENTION**

[www.lyontattooconvention.com](http://www.lyontattooconvention.com)  
 Villeurbanne, France

**FEBRUARY 25 - 26**

**TATTOO MELTDOWN**

Folkets Hus Kulturhus,  
 Trollhättan, Sweden  
[www.tattoo-meltdown.com](http://www.tattoo-meltdown.com)  
 Email: [info@tattoo-meltdown.com](mailto:info@tattoo-meltdown.com)

**MARCH 5 - 6**

**MANCHESTER TATTOO SHOW**

Manchester Central Centre,  
 Manchester,  
[www.manchestertattooshow.co.uk](http://www.manchestertattooshow.co.uk)

**MARCH 11 - 13**

**BUDAPEST INTERNATIONAL TATTOO CONVENTION**

Lurdy House, Ungarn, Budapest,  
 Hungary  
[www.budapesttattooconvention.com](http://www.budapesttattooconvention.com)

**MARCH 12 - 13**

**LICHTENSTEIN TATTOO CONVENTION**

Sporryhalle Vaduz, Lichtenstein  
[www.tattoo81.li](http://www.tattoo81.li)

**MARCH 20 - 21**

**ESSEX TATTOO EXPO**

The Brentwood Centre, Doddinghurst  
 Road, Brentwood, Essex, England  
[www.myspace.com/essexattooexpo](http://www.myspace.com/essexattooexpo)

**MARCH 25 - 27**

**KILLIBEGS TATTOO CONVENTION**

Killibegs, Co. Donegal, Ireland  
[www.myspace.com/killibegstattoo](http://www.myspace.com/killibegstattoo)

**MARCH 26 - 27**

**SCOTTISH TATTOO CONVENTION**

The Corn Exchange, Edinburgh,  
 Scotland  
 Info: 0131 556 6669  
[www.scottishtattooconvention.com](http://www.scottishtattooconvention.com)

**MARCH 27**

**PETERLEE TATTOO ARTS FESTIVAL**

Peterlee Leisure Centre, Peterlee,  
 County Durham, England  
 Tel: 0191 5871787  
[eddie@ehardiman.orangehome.co.uk](mailto:eddie@ehardiman.orangehome.co.uk)

**APRIL 1 - 3**

**COPENHAGEN INK FESTIVAL**

TAP 1, Ny Carlsbergvej 91, 1738  
 Copenhagen, Denmark  
[www.inkfest.dk](http://www.inkfest.dk)

**APRIL 10**

**INK & IRON TATTOO CONVENTION**

The Tower, Reservoir Road, Edgbaston,  
 Birmingham, B16 9EE, England  
 Email: [info@inkandiron.co.uk](mailto:info@inkandiron.co.uk)

**APRIL 16 - 17**

**TATTOO EXTRAVANZA**

South Parade Pier, Portsmouth  
[www.tattooextravanza.co.uk](http://www.tattooextravanza.co.uk)

**APRIL 16 - 17**

**NORTH LAKES TATTOO CONVENTION**

Shepherds Inn & Auctioneer,  
 Carlisle, Cumbria  
[www.northlakestattooshow.com](http://www.northlakestattooshow.com)

## WALK THIS WAY...

Since Gary Caven was a kid, he has had a keen interest in tattoos. "I used to be fascinated that my Dad and Papa's tattoos were permanent. I always wanted one so I would buy those bubble gums specifically to get the small tattoo transfer inside."

When Gary was old enough, he got his first tattoo as soon as he could and even then he wanted to customise the flash he had chosen: "I always had a strong view on tattoos being personalised and that's why I only do custom work." Having a real passion for art, he decided to go to Art school and completed a course in fine art and graphic design. Then it was onto Manchester and an extra year in graphic design at Bury college.

Gary's first proper job was based in an art department, illustrating design specs for big contracts. While there, he got an opportunity to work with a sculptor, within the company, who was a major influence on his career. "I spent my time sculpting animated characters in clay and also in polystyrene."

About seven years ago, his manager at Yell, saw him browsing through tattoo magazines and recommended he go to Middleton for his tattoo. Gary went to see Louis Molloy and from the moment he met him he knew he wanted to be a tattoo artist. "Louis' studio was modern and he oozed class. For a period of five years, I went to him and now I have a custom sleeve, which I designed myself. It was an education watching him tattoo, his shading techniques and fast neat lining. The moment I set foot in that studio, I was hooked."

In 2009 Gary did some graphics work for a tattoo shop in Gretna and instantly hit it off with the owner. Gary asked the owner if he would teach him the craft. "He let me apprentice with him a few days a week. I was 26 and I learned and studied more about tattooing in eighteen months than I did about anything else before."

Eventually, Gary was tattooing his friends in the studio, then he started taking appointments, building up his own clientele. "I was working late at night and it was costing me a fortune but it wasn't about the money, it was about educating myself."

In the end Gary decided to leave as he wanted a place closer to home and his kids. "I love the design process for the customer as it allows me to produce high spec visuals for them so they can



see what their tattoo will be like once inked. I thrive on giving the customer a custom design as if it was me getting the tattoo!

"I am hoping to do some of the smaller UK conventions in 2011/2012 and then onto the bigger UK events and abroad. My biggest influences are Louis Molloy, Bob Tyrell and Robert Hernandez - I love their black and grey work and portraits, which are my main style. I also like the work of Silvia Z, Jason Butcher and Jess Yen who all produce amazing contemporary Japanese work."

If you are passing through Southwest Scotland or like what you see here - Gary will always strive to more than meet your expectations, accompanied by his artistic design advice, you're sure to be in good hands.

**GPC Custom Tattoo**

179b Heathall Industrial Estate Dumfries DG1 3PH

Tel: 07784876758

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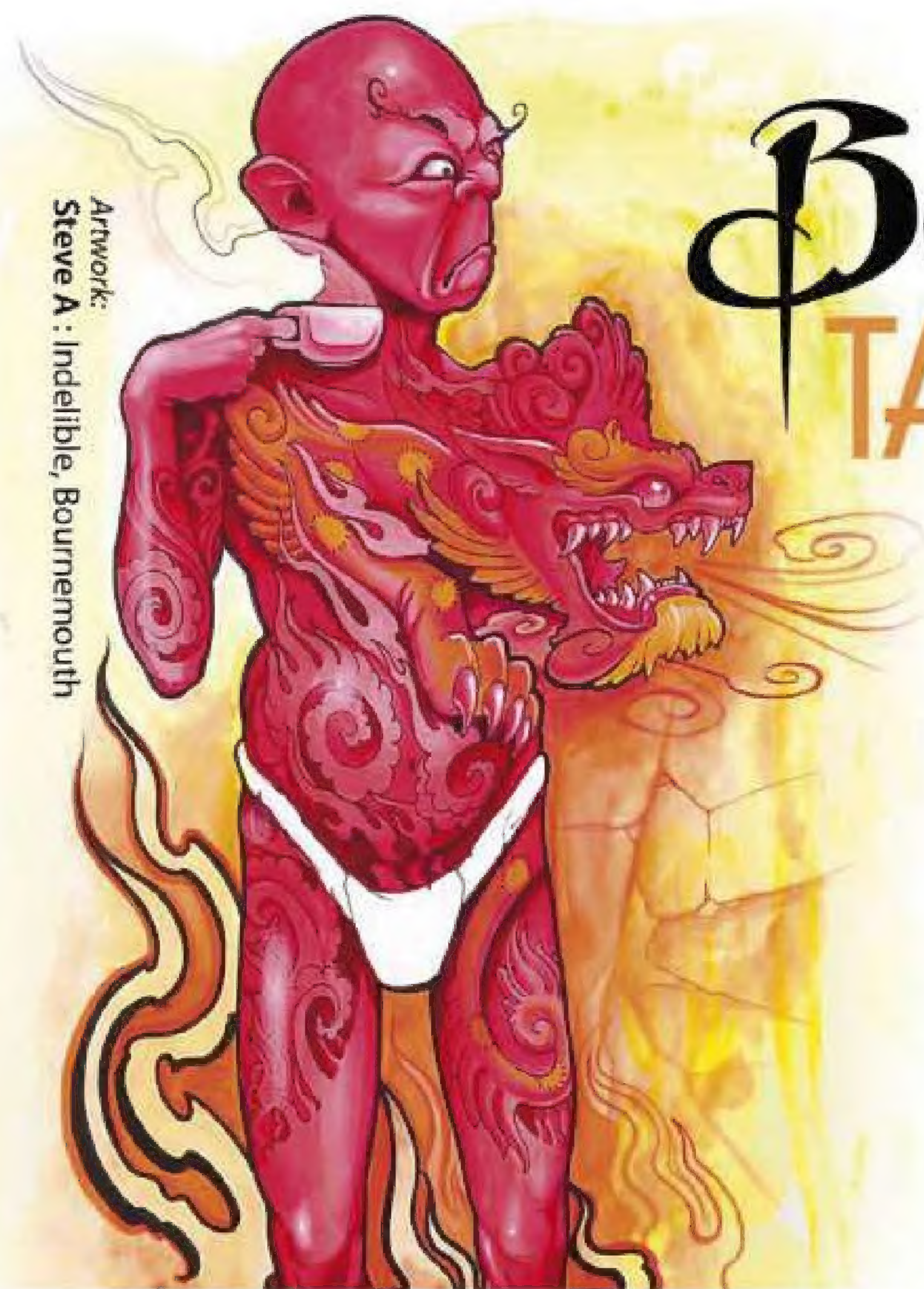
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**MAY 1 – 2**

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ticket office 01633 656757

**MAY 13 – 15**

### **LIVERPOOL TATTOO CONVENTION**

The Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool, England  
[www.tattooconvention.co.uk](http://www.tattooconvention.co.uk)

**MAY 21 – 22**

### **17TH ALCHEMY TATTOO EXPO**

Salle Polyvalente, Conthey, Switzerland  
[www.alchemy-tattoo-expo.ch](http://www.alchemy-tattoo-expo.ch)

**MAY 21 – 22**

### **12TH INTERNATIONAL NEEDLE ART CONVENTION**

Bress Sportcenter  
Breda – The Netherlands

**MAY 28 – 29**

### **BOURNEMOUTH INK 2011**

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t: 0118 959 0700

**JUNE 18 - 19**

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t: 07796 936 355

**JUNE 18 - 19**

### **12TH ANNUAL PORTSMOUTH CONVENTION**

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**JUNE 24 – 26**

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# SMALLMAN SYNDROME

## One man's tragic obsession with the sillier side of tattooing...

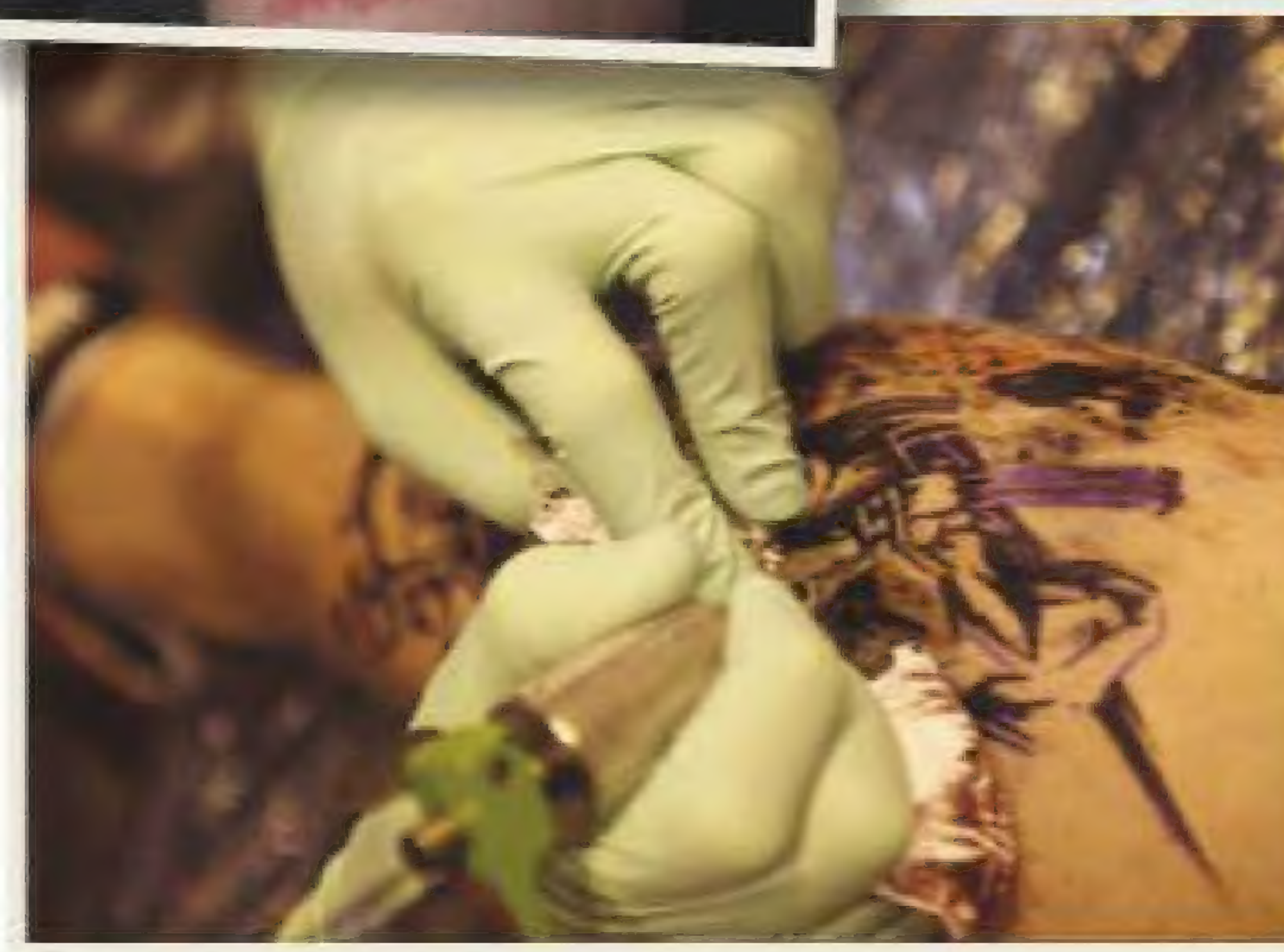
**H**ello fellow tattoo fans, hope all is well with you. Seems the coolest thing to do this month (pun definitely intended) is to talk about Tattoo Freeze in Telford. Was a cracking weekend and it's nice to have something to look forward to so early in the year. I had a blast (as I always do at conventions) and it was great to see some familiar faces and meet some new people too.

Of course, it wouldn't be a convention without me getting tattooed, so I took the opportunity to have the awesome Matt Hugill from Tattoo UK do me a matching Streetfighter piece on the back of my right leg – especially as he'd done such a great job with my Akuma piece back at Tattoo Freeze 2010. It's such an abstract piece and he's done a great job on it – you can see from the photographs in this article how great it looks completed, and also how different it looked at the outline stage. More than a few people wandered by wondering what it was a couple of hours in, but the second it was finished I had people coming up to me and complimenting me on how awesome Vega looks. I'm seriously pleased with it, thanks again to Matt. Now to decide which Streetfighter characters to have on the front of my legs... (it has to be Blanka surely – Ed!)

As always it was a pleasure for me to host the awards and get to be onstage and up close to so many great tattoos on both days. It's not just the quality of the tattoos that I saw on offer that astounded me, but also the creativity in terms of the ideas behind them. Some made me giggle too – you'll see pictures in next months supplement), but the portrait of Bricktop (from the movie Snatch – catchphrase “in the words of the Virgin Mary, come again?”) and the lightbulb full of Nemo characters really stood out for me.

As I was being tattooed I had to stop a guy to talk to him about his arm – I thought I was one of very few to have a video game sleeve, but as you can see from the pictures you're not likely to see many better than the one belonging to Ted Burrows of Winchester. The amazing work was done by Tommy at No Regrets in Cheltenham, and I would have high fived Ted but I was having the back of my knee inked at the time and wasn't as upbeat as I could have been!

On a final note, was especially nice



to meet various people who have submitted their silly ink to me – both artists and canvases. Was also pretty cool to have more than one person come up to me and say “you're the comedian dude who is obsessed with daft tattoos, right? Check THIS out!”

My job is the greatest. Don't forget to keep on submitting your amusing tattoos – and I'll print the most awesome ones each month.

Now to get back to limping around on a half healed leg...

Email: [jim@skindeep.co.uk](mailto:jim@skindeep.co.uk)

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# PICNIC AT HANGING ROCK

## PART II

Having successfully navigated the wilds of the outback, (and I quote - "Drove 1000km in two days but internet dongle still working at the moment") - Craigy Lee continues his road trip across Australia and finds that not only is there talent in the most barren of places, but he has also invented a whole new art form using only giant insects and a vehicle...



### I have trouble switching off.

Our first stops are Albany and Esperance - think seaside town from the Goonies. Both these towns have tattoo studios but in typical

towards tattoos out here, you can feel peoples eyes examining and scrutinising your every ink line especially when its hot and you have more skin on show, as my girlfriend India found out in the public pool in Norseman. Some locals will come and talk to you and being tattooed is the starting point for their conversation, bare in mind some of the towns we stopped in had a population of 30 at the most so any traveller is obviously an interesting prospect for a conversation. A very chatty station cashier in Ceduna admires our tattoos and kept us talking for a while: "You don't get work like that out here" she concludes, as I fondle a bag of crisps with "Free Tattoo" plastered down the side. My inner child instantly imagines collecting tokens to save for a tattoo, alas it was just a lick and stick similar to the ones I got in chewing gum when I was a kid. Regardless, the mainstream success of tattooing is creeping into everyday life. A lot of the towns we stopped in could easily double up as a post apocalyptic set for a Mad Max film, you can feel the isolation and that got

**A**s we leave Perth we are about to embark on a mammoth road trip in a Ford 4x4 which will take us some 8000km from the west coast of Australia to the east, the biggest drive I have undertaken in my life! Most of this journey is outback, not much to see and not many places to stop off. We have planned two weeks for the drive and I am undecided as to what is more terrifying, the thought of breaking down in the middle of nowhere or the fact that I will not be tattooing for two weeks. Sometimes

Australian fashion they are both closed by the time we arrive so I can't have a nosey around. As we drive on, towns become further apart and insects become HUGE after a few days travelling the car looks like it has been ambushed in a paintball skirmish, bright yellow, green and red splats give the truck some body art of its own, we cross the Nullarbor Plain over the western/southern Australian border and places to stop for petrol become 300km apart in some spots. The smaller towns are quite simply a petrol station and a motel, not even a McDonalds or a Starbucks let alone a tattoo studio! There is definitely a different attitude



Out Back

Kimba



One Of  
The Locals



Hitch Hiking

**THERE IS DEFINITELY A DIFFERENT ATTITUDE TOWARDS TATTOOS OUT HERE, YOU CAN FEEL PEOPLES EYES EXAMINING AND SCRUTINISING YOUR EVERY INK LINE ESPECIALLY WHEN ITS HOT AND YOU HAVE MORE SKIN ON SHOW.**

me thinking - there are many isolated towns across Australia, but where is the most isolated tattoo studio? After researching I was pointed in the direction of Alice Springs, a town slap bang in the middle of the country, as the locals call it the "red centre". The population is 26,000, that means if a shop tattooed 11 people a day it would take just six years to tattoo every single person who lives here, granted a few thousand are children but you get the picture, thank goodness for tourists! The small town syndrome may be one of the contributing factors to the increasingly popular "backyarders" tattooing from home in Australia. There is no way you could open a studio in a town with a population of 30, 60 or even 120 and have it as a sustainable source of income to live on. Most towns in the UK are a drivable distance from a studio so the opportunity to do a proper apprenticeship is far greater if you are determined enough, however the sheer distances between some towns and studios here makes it impossible unless you are willing to relocate yourself. With all this in mind, it still





# PICNIC AT HANGING ROCK

Hal At Work



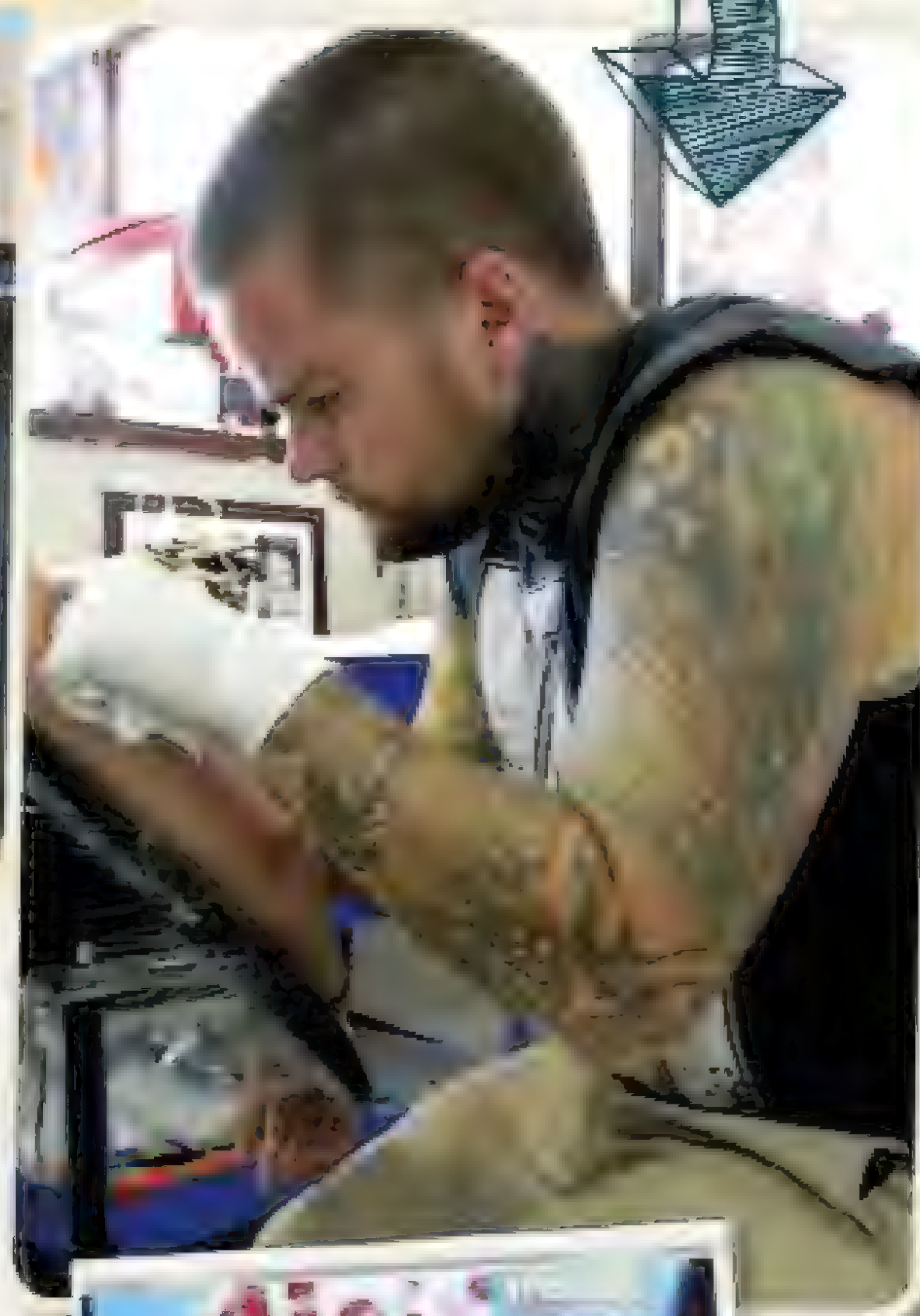
Shop Front

doesn't make life easier when you are dealing with some of the work produced in kitchens and spare rooms across Australia, I have done a lot more fixing here than I ever have in London! Central tattooing has been situated in Alice Springs for 5 years, Artist and owner Dwayne specialises in black and grey work and Hal enjoys colour, although customers looking for great colour pieces he admits are few and far between "black and grey work is all people want in Alice Springs". Both are good all round tattooists to meet demand and the boys work on a lot of tourists which means they don't create as much custom work as they would like, however there is a small group of loyal regulars they can get their needles sunk in to. The shop itself is relatively

modern and sports a good range of Iron Fist clothing. Indeed after a two-day solid drive with no internet or phone signal you get the feeling it is seriously cut off, getting supplies in this day and age is no problem as long as you are prepared to wait a while for it to arrive, try 3-4 weeks even for needles! Hal informs me that the nearest shop is "about 1500km away in Port Augusta or Darwin" and he makes the 3000km trip to Brisbane to get his work done which can be a huge drawback. For me Brisbane will have to wait as Melbourne is my next stop where I will be working the Rites of Passage Tattoo Festival and getting tattooed by Steve Byrne. Until next month...



More from Craigy next issue as he continues his Tour



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WORDS: TRINITY AUTHEM-SMITH

# BRAND ON THE RUN

**I'm the kind of guy who likes to wear his heart on his sleeve...** literally. Let me give you an example; when I gave up drinking a few years back, I decided that I was going to go Straight Edge. So for me this wasn't just following the ideals of Straight Edge but it was also getting every t-shirt or cap available that declared my intention - did I mention I was obsessive as well...

**S**o for a few months, or however long it took for the phase to wear off, I walked around with shirts declaring, "Not in my neighbourhood" or "Above the Influence". These days, I still don't drink but I no longer class myself as Straight Edge. Onto the next phase...

What I am trying to get at, is that whether it be by nature or nurture, there is something intrinsic in us humans that compels us to be part of a tribe. We only seem to feel at ease when we belong to a larger group that is easily identifiable. Or simply put, we like to be part of a gang and we like displaying our colours!

This of course, plays right into the hands of big business, advertisers and the media. We can be identified, boxed and targeted. Branding, the stuff by which money making dreams are made of. Branding is what makes or breaks a person or product. You ain't nothing these days unless you're a brand.

And the tattoo world is no different. It wasn't long ago that the only big tattoo brand about, that I can think of, was Sailor Jerry. Nowadays, where ever you seem to go on the high street, tattoos and tattooing are in your face. If it's not a big gun in the industry selling his name, it's sugar skulls on trainers or old school designs on clothes.

The first name in the tattooing world to take advantage of this craze was Ed Hardy. Back in 2002, if you were part of the tattoo culture you already knew who Ed Hardy was, you didn't need Madonna or Britney Spears being photographed wearing his label to recognise the name. Now every one seems to know who he

is... oh yeah, you know, that guy who makes cool clothes.

Let me set something straight. I am not having a go at Ed Hardy, not by a long shot. Hell, if some one told me I could make big bucks sticking my name on an item of clothing, I would jump at the opportunity. You would be a fool if you didn't. The problem I have with all this, is the people who seem to be buying the clothes.

The other day a friend of mine, who is a fellow tattoo head, popped into Starbucks to get a coffee. Standing in front of him was a young kid with a big, shiny puffy Ed Hardy jacket. "It looked shit," he told me. "You wouldn't catch me dead in one and what's more the guy looked like he would never get a tattoo in his life."

And this is the crux of the story. People who are wearing all this tattoo gear don't seem to be into tattoos. I have always been of the belief that you wear what you support or what you believe in. I love Kiss and Placebo so I wear my Gene Simmons, tongue out covered in blood t-shirt and my Placebo arena tour cap with pride. Conversely, I would rather have my arm ripped off and be beaten with it than wear a Take That, or god forbid, a Jedward item of clothing.

Now I know Take That and Jedward are no way near as cool as Ed Hardy and a comparison should earn me a good telling off but I hope you get my point. Tattoos are the latest branding wagon to be jumping on... well that is if you are not into tattoos it seems.

Another example is Louis Vuitton. You know the guy who sells bags that cost you a kidney or two. Well recently, Mr. Vuitton has hooked up with Scott Campbell to create a new tattoo inspired range of bags and accessories just for those super rich folk out there, who are of course tattooed from head to foot and

like to hang out at tattoo conventions. Now the few times I have been coerced into popping into Harvey Nicks or Harrods and I found myself lurking about the designer label section. I don't recall seeing anyone else overly covered in ink. Oh, of course, because within seconds I have been escorted outside for fear I might nick something from the shop. You know what those tattoo folk are like!

The problem with all this branding and market targeting, is that when a celebrity decides to switch endorsements or simply falls out of the public arena, if the brand isn't strong enough, it will sink. The Ed Hardy brand is starting to feel this as the new year rolls on. In 2009 the Hardy brand was going through the roof but towards the end of 2010 shops were being closed and future development put on hold. People are looking for a new label to wear.

And this is because, at the end of the day, the current trend in tattoo fashion is just that, a phase. The advertisers saw a hole in the market, aimed their brand at the average guy in the street and now the consumer is moving on, they may find themselves with store rooms full of unsold merchandise.

Herein lies the catch-22. I am glad tattooing is becoming recognised for the art form it is, that tattooists are now being respected for their craft BUT I am not so happy about it becoming a fashion statement and that people who walk around covered in tattoo apparel wouldn't get inked if their lives depended on it.

I want to go back to the days when having ink made a statement about who and what you were. I want my tribe back. ★





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<b>A VALENTINE'S DAY MASSACRE</b>		WORTHING, Pavilion 01903 206205 <a href="http://www.worthingtheatres.co.uk">www.worthingtheatres.co.uk</a>	Wed 9 MAR
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DARLINGTON, Civic Theatre 01225 686555 <a href="http://www.darlington.gov.uk/Culture/arts">www.darlington.gov.uk/Culture/arts</a>	Sat 26 FEB	ST ALBANS, Alban Arena 01727 644488 <a href="http://www.alban-arena.co.uk">www.alban-arena.co.uk</a>	Tue 22 MAR
BLACKPOOL, Grand Theatre 01253 290193 <a href="http://www.blackpoolgrand.co.uk">www.blackpoolgrand.co.uk</a>	Sun 27 FEB	NORTHAMPTON, Royal and Derngate 01604 624611 <a href="http://www.royalenderngate.co.uk">www.royalenderngate.co.uk</a>	Wed 23 MAR
MANCHESTER, Palace Theatre 0844 847 2484 <a href="http://www.manchesterpalace.org.uk">www.manchesterpalace.org.uk</a>	Mon 28 FEB	KING'S LYNN, Corn Exchange 01553 64884 <a href="http://www.kingslynnexchange.co.uk">www.kingslynnexchange.co.uk</a>	Thu 24 MAR
NEW BRIGHTON, Floral Pavilion Theatre 0151 666 0000 <a href="http://www.floralspavilion.com">www.floralspavilion.com</a>	Tue 1 MAR	WOLVERHAMPTON, Grand Theatre 01902 428212 <a href="http://www.grandtheatre.co.uk">www.grandtheatre.co.uk</a>	Fri 25 MAR
BRECON, Theatr Brycheiniog 01374 611522 <a href="http://www.brycheiniog.co.uk">www.brycheiniog.co.uk</a>	Wed 2 MAR	WOOLLEY HOLE, Theatre 01749 672243 <a href="http://www.woolley.co.uk">www.woolley.co.uk</a>	Sat 26 & Sun 27 MAR





# All American Nightmare!

**In the trade, it's what they call a bonanza!** One of your all time favourite tattooed vixens – that would be Jesse Lee Denning – running the whole show in one of your favourite bands video clips. Not just any old video clip either – Hinder's All American Nightmare clip is old school – it has a story, kicks like a mule and is altogether just a little bit cool. Opportunities like this don't come along every day for tattooed models – so who better to tell the story than Jesse herself... who said being a tattooed model was an easy life?

“

After a very successful time signing and promoting my 2011 calendar at the London Tattoo convention, and then taking a few extra post convention days in one of my favorite cities (London), I flew back home to New York City. No sooner had I stepped off the plane than I had the bombshell dropped

on me that I was to pretty much turn around and fly to LA to film a music video for Hinder's brand new single, "All American Nightmare".

The idea of the video was that I go to bed appearing to be a "good girl" without tattoos and, having fallen asleep with my ipod on, have a nightmare triggered by the song which turns me into a "bad girl" covered in

tattoos - and then wake to realize it was just a nightmare...or was it? It was an opportunity I couldn't turn down and a very flattering offer! (I also ended up shooting their album packaging at a later date).

So, I kept my adrenaline going with some caffeine and not so healthy treats, (there's that bad girl kicking in already - Ed) packed and repacked and



PHOTO DALE MAY



PHOTO JAMMI YORK



PHOTO JAMMI YORK



PHOTO JAMMI YORK



PHOTO JAMMI YORK

I go to bed appearing to be a "good girl" without tattoos and, having fallen asleep with my ipod on, have a nightmare triggered by the song which turns me into a "bad girl" covered in tattoos



set off back to the airport. It was then that I was told I had to learn the song word for word as I would be lip-syncing the entire song and I was also to be the only one in the video – no band, no one except me! Yikes! For the way the clip was going to be filmed, I was given the song to learn at different speeds – some were painfully slow and others so fast you couldn't even understand the words.

It wasn't easy but I spent the plane ride learning every single lyric anyway and practicing getting the words out at the different speeds. Needless to say my neighbour on the plane thought I was a bit odd. On my arrival that night, John Gilchrist (one of the video's directors) picked

me up and took me to my hotel. It so happened I was staying at The Standard which at night turns into a nightclub. Great. All I wanted to do was sleep as I had an 8am call time the next day for rehearsals and was totally jet lagged. Anyway, after some dinner and being lulled asleep by the distant sound of

## JESSE'S TATTOOS BY

Jason Kuedell  
Shinji Horizakura  
Timothy Hayer  
Andre Malcolm  
Troy Denning  
Marco Serio  
Regino Gonzales  
Julie Becker





By the time it was over, I had  
rug burns on my knees, bumps,  
bruises and scratches, not to  
mention being so jet lagged at this  
point that I was running on fumes.



## HINDER

Hinder didn't so much sneak onto the US rock scene as explode onto it – years of hard work culminated in what appeared to be overnight success. Like so many bands of this "arena" ilk before them, their success has been met with equal amounts of vitriol for being too big and too dumb, but they can consider themselves in good company with Nickelback and Daughtry when it comes to that – several gazillion sales globally can't be wrong.

Their third album – All American Nightmare – and the release of the self-titled single/video clip, should see them add just a few more numbers to their already impressive sales figures. For those looking for the full Jesse experience, the video clip is widely available on YouTube. For a full review of the album, flip over to page 81.

screaming partygoers and the thump of bass thundering through the building, I finally fell asleep – I think!

The next day, I arrived at The Stables (at The Paramour) studios – which is gorgeous – and was introduced to the incredibly talented and wonderful crew – directors, producer, lighting crew, label rep, MUA, hair, wardrobe and last but not least my choreographers! Yes, choreographers. After figuring out my wardrobe changes, I spent most of the day with the choreographers, going over "dances" and movement to give the nightmare-ish feel that the video has with all of the speed changes (that jerky, creepy, somewhat spastic feel). After a long day of rehearsals I excitedly went back to my hotel, met a friend for dinner and was asleep before midnight as this time I had a 6:30a call time and a 15 hour intensive day to look forward to!!

The day of the shoot was a bit of a blur. While it was a long day – lots of footage got shot that wasn't used in the final video, lighting changes, make-up changes all take a long time – it was an amazing experience. It was a total rush but I was 110% into my character as the good girl gone bad – possessed by Austin (Hinder's vocalist) in a nightmare/dream. I was instructed to pretty much channel him and not rock out like a "girl" but really get into a more aggressive 'macho' state of mind.

By the time it was over, I had rug







PHOTO DALE MAY

By the end of the shoot I didn't know my head from my elbow, I was completely drained, but I am really happy with the end result, it was an experience of a lifetime!

burns on my knees, bumps, bruises and scratches, not to mention being so jet lagged at this point that I was running on fumes. I realized how much goes into a video, it's amazing - and the speed changes in the music (that are then sped up or slowed down to real time for the final video) were grueling to nail lyrically and combine with the

choreographed movements.

So everyone who thinks this was an easy video to make is dead wrong. Most of it was shot either really fast or reeeeeeeaaaally sloooooow! By the end of the shoot I didn't know my head from my elbow, I was completely drained, but I am really happy with the end result, it was an experience of a lifetime! ★



## THE DIRECTORS CUT

All American Nightmare was directed by John Ales and Trevor Gidchrist of The Ales/Gidchrist Machine and were more than happy to throw their points of view into the grinder on a day in the life of this Vixen.

"We were shooting in L.A. and Jesse lives in New York, so that threw a spanner in the works from the start! The shoot was prepared in four days and the truth of the matter is - we were petrified!"

Jesse was given to us on a silver platter. She had come to the band's attention by the mention of the head of A & R at Universal Republic. The band fell quickly in love and when we got the job, we were told to find a way to make her the band's voice on All American Nightmare as they weren't even able to be there! Until she arrived in Los Angeles (her first time ever in the

city), we were totally unaware of her capacity as a dancer and we were making a dance story of a girl who becomes possessed by the Hinder song 'Sexy'.

No one could produce anything but photos - and obviously she could carry a shot as long as you could keep it on her - but could she move? We pitched without her. Choreographed without her. Tested without her. Prepped without her. All along, we prayed for her to show us and take control.

Eventually, I (John) met her at the airport and became thoroughly charmed. The next morning, she showed up at our location - the old stables at The Paramount in Silver Lake and she was quiet, confident, tiny and so sweet!

She worked a few minutes with Bruce Swenitzer, our choreographer, wrapping

her head around the task. We'd be playing all sorts of tempos and in essence, we needed for her to get tossed around by this song. Super slow, maniacally fast and go, go, go!

The women worked with the three separately, exorcising tempers and before you know it, Kim Garner - the most incredibly cool woman from the lake - was there with us to watch this girl command the set. With only an hour and a half of rehearsal, J. Lee. It proved she was ready to kill this video!

We could also easily not have done this without her. She murdered it and look how hot she comes off. Jesse can fit in your pocket, but look at her - you can just tell if you caught her on a bad moment, she'd kick your ass. And that's all we needed. Nearly a million views and these fans love her!"





# Portsmouth Ink

## TATTOO & BODY PIERCING

Opening the doors of our first studio at Hilsea in May 2009, **Portsmouth Ink** has gone from strength to strength.

Thanks must go to David, one of our owners for securing the **Portsmouth Ink** name for the studio.

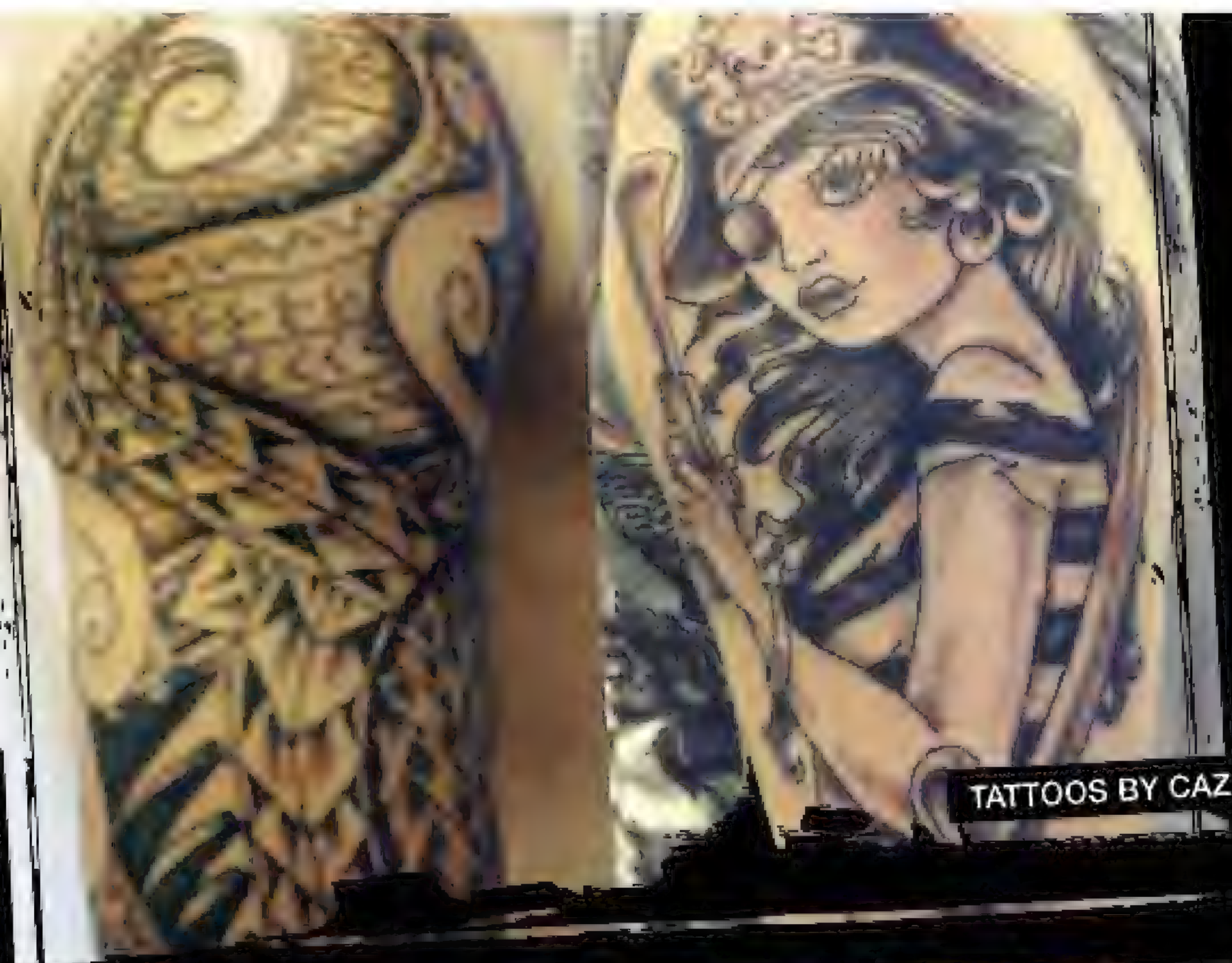
After some success we decided to open our second studio a few months later, December 2009, on the Albert Road.

Thankfully both studios have done well, with lots of recommendations and great write ups coming into our website and Facebook page, helped by the talented artists we have working in our two great looking studios.



TATTOOS BY DAMIAN





TATTOOS BY CAZ



TATTOOS BY JAMES



TATTOOS BY WES

## ABOUT OUR ARTISTS

We have four amazingly talented artists working at **Portsmouth Ink**. **CAZ** was the first to join us – a piercer with ten years experience, she was excellent at art, so Lee (whose studio she was working in at the time) trained her as a tattooist. When she joined she had over five years of tattoo experience and now works in the studio as tattooist and piercer.

Next **JAMES** came and found us. When he produced the artwork from his portfolio it was simply jaw-droppingly good. Living and breathing his artwork he was an excellent addition to the studio.

**WES** joined us on the 1st December 2009. His artwork will blow you away, and the versatility he has in doing black and grey, portraiture and full colour speaks for itself.

Last but not least to join the **Portsmouth Ink** team was **DAMIAN**. When I first met Damian he could not stop talking about his love of Dot work tattoos. And with so much passion for his craft I knew that he had to join the team.

**www.portsmouthink.co.uk**

110 Albert Rd & 8 Walberant Buildings, Portsmouth

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# MASTERS OF REALITY

Last issue we hooked up with Mike DeVries to talk about his studio and well, whatever else happened to come along. This issue, we wrap it all up as we get a further view on the world through the eyes of The Master of Reality.



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Sometimes it's not easy to get everything you need to talk about into a handy single issue feature - fortunately, Mike DeVries had more than enough to talk about for it to span a couple of issues and we have no qualms whatsoever about featuring more of his studios work. Thus, here comes part two of Masters of Reality:

**When you look at your crew and the work they produce, do you see in them what they don't? In that, I mean, do you see where the potential is headed and how good they will be in a few years time and is that something that is really open and encouraged amongst yourselves?** My favourite game that has ever been created is chess, and everyone who knows this game knows that you have to

look several moves ahead or else you will lose. I kind of live my life that way and when I hire someone to work with me, I definitely look a few moves ahead and that is all about the potential that I see in that person. Knowing if they do certain things or stick with something they will achieve great things. For example, look at Cecil Porter - not to toot my own horn, but nobody knew of him or had ever seen his work - he came to me at a Hell City convention asking me to critique his portfolio and then he took my seminar.

He only had a handful of tattoos in his portfolio that were decent and lived in Ohio - he emailed me after the convention seeing if I would hire him. Just within those few decent tattoos, I saw that this guy could be good if he was in the right place and given the chance. So I gave him a chance and he moved to California. While he worked

with me, I would constantly help him in the direction he wanted to go in and although he doesn't work with me anymore, nobody can say that he is not a great realistic tattoo artist these days.

Every artist that I hire, I have to see something in that person, whether they are already good at what they do, or show some potential. Even more importantly, I need to make sure they are capable of staying humble and that they are hungry to get better at what they do. Josh came to me with a great portfolio and now it's 10 times better. London is on his way - I have been sitting down with him getting him going. And Jeff and Katelyn are stepping up to the plate too. It's not because of me just standing and saying "Do better work!". It's the shop as a whole feeding off of everyone's energy and bringing out the best in each and everyone of us.



JOSH DUFFY



JEFF JOHNSON



JEFF JOHNSON



I am a better tattoo artist today because of my co-workers. I constantly ask them questions regarding art and tattoos, just like they ask me. It goes full circle. We're happy and stoked to feed off of each other and that's what will make us all better in the end.

**I can't walk out of here without quizzing Mike about himself at least a little - there are far too many questions to ask - so I must ask the obvious: and that is do you find the realism tag you've got attached to your name sits comfortably and how did you get to that point? It must be one of the toughest genres to work in. And the killer part of the question must be, are good realism tattooists born or made? I would say it's a natural talent that becomes refined over time, but I do know some**

**people that have learned it. Although in those instances, I think there's sometimes a little bit of soul missing - sometimes the "spark" is missing.**

I was always intrigued with art throughout my life and love what I do today and have no plans of changing it. Portraiture always caught my eye growing up, but going into tattooing, I didn't know that would become my forte.

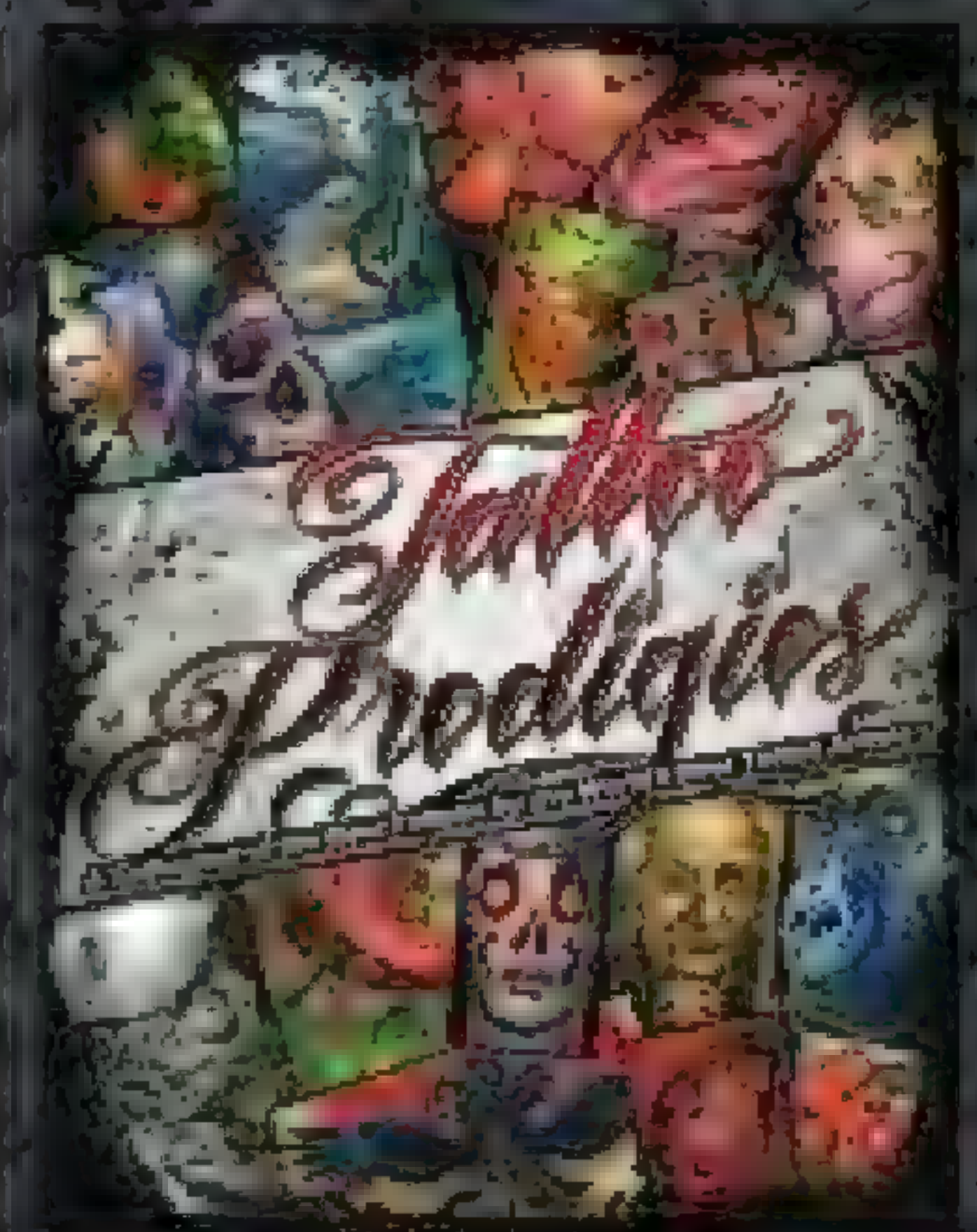
The realism tag that's attached to my name sits just fine with me, but when I look back to when I started tattooing, I was doing all sorts of different styles, just to learn how to tattoo and trying to figure out my niche. My mentor Jim Hayek did a lot of amazing new skool, bright, colourful work with solid outlines. He also dabbled in pin-ups and realism himself, so early on in my career I tried the same type of work and ended up tattooing some pin-ups as well - and

**MORE AND MORE PEOPLE WANTED PORTRAITS FROM ME AND I WASN'T COMPLAINING BECAUSE I LOVED DOING IT! I REMEMBER TATTOOING A COUPLE OF LIONS IN COLOUR THAT PEOPLE SAW AND LIKED AND THOSE WERE A COUPLE OF PIECES THAT HELPED GET THE BALL ROLLING.**

then a couple of animals and portraits of people, and it just started to escalate. More and more people wanted portraits from me and I wasn't complaining because I loved doing it! I remember tattooing a couple of lions in colour that people saw and liked and those were a couple of pieces that helped get the ball rolling. ☺



# MASTERS OF REALITY



## TATTOO PRODIGIES

Never content with simply promoting his own work, Mike has a genuine love of the art which he shows by regularly working with other respected artists and producing some fine products. On that very subject, fans of art books should really be checking out Tattoo Prodigies - a monster coffee table book at 10" x 13" with 256 full colour pages. Suffice to say, Prodigies will probably never leave your coffee table once you've got your paws on it.

**I BELIEVE JUST HAVING ANIMALS GROWING UP AND LOVING THEM AS PETS HAS INFLUENCED MY TATTOO WORK, BUT LIKE I SAID EARLIER, WHEN I WENT INTO TATTOOING I DIDN'T KNOW I WAS GOING TO BE A WILDLIFE ANIMAL PORTRAITURE ARTIST, I KIND OF FELL INTO IT**

I think realism tattooists can be both born and made, but these days I think that more often than not, they are made. Some tattoo artists that are doing a different style, see the attention that a realism artist gets, and then want to try it and learn it. I'm not saying it's a bad thing, but that's where a lot of these guys are "made" portrait artists and not "born". Sometimes, they may not even

know they had the talent and maybe they were born with it and never knew it. It really could go either way. As far as 'spark' or 'soul' being missing from someone that jumps into it, that just depends on the individual - everyone is different and everyone has a different eye for things. Some will pick it up faster and some take a bit longer to get it. Realism is not easy though and even

though that's what I do, I'm still learning and trying to figure things out too. **You work a lot with animal art - is there a deep-rooted love of nature inside of you that allows you be as creative as you are with it?**

I love animals and have always had all different sorts of pets growing up as a kid. I had fish, lizards, snakes, hamsters, mice, squirrels, dogs, cats... you name it. I am a huge dog and cat lover! As of now, I have a beautiful Bullmastiff named Daisy, and my son has a little frog. We recently lost a little lizard that we had.

I grew up in a family of outdoorsmen. My Dad, Grandpa, all my uncles all loved the outdoors. A lot of fishing and camping occurred while I was growing up. So there is love for the animals from just being outdoors my whole childhood, but these days I don't get out very often - I'm just too tied up with work. Nowadays, with my wife and son, we do different things outdoors, such as snowboarding and riding dirt bikes. I loved going to the zoo while growing up and I still do. I love photographing the animals when I go.

I believe just having animals growing up and loving them as pets has influenced my tattoo work, but like I said earlier, when I went into tattooing I didn't know I was going to be a wildlife animal portraiture artist. I kind of fell into it while viewing some of Tom Reashaw's work during my apprenticeship. I asked my mentor, "How the heck is he doing this? These animal portraits are amazing!" That had a lot of influence on me as well. I love all sorts of art and even though I have







JEFF JOHNSON



KATLYN CRATE



KATLYN CRATE



LONDON



ALICE DEVRIES

**I HAVE TAKEN A STEP BACK FROM TRAVELLING AND ATTENDING CONVENTIONS, BECAUSE IT TAKES UP TOO MUCH TIME AND ENERGY. THE TIME BEING AWAY FROM HOME KILLS ME. I WILL STILL ATTEND CONVENTIONS, BUT IT WILL JUST BE A SELECT FEW A YEAR**

a name in the realism tattoo world, that isn't all I appreciate. I love it all!

**Is it hard juggling all of your multiple projects successfully and being a family man at the same time - particularly when it comes to conventions and road trips? We should probably assume that TV is the enemy in a life with so many disciplines handled successfully, yes?**

Yes, it is hard to juggle a few different businesses, with projects within all of them and be the family man. I just try my best! I have taken a step back from travelling and attending conventions, because it takes up too much time and energy. The time being away from home kills me. I will still attend conventions, but it will just be a select few a year - a couple overseas and a couple in the States and that's it. My focus is always ☺



on the priorities and then go from there - that's what I do on a daily basis. Finding time for my family is becoming more and more important to me, so I make sure I find the time for them. I don't spend too much time watching TV - for many years I only watched one or two shows here and there, I wasn't one of those guys that sat in front of a TV all day. Nowadays, I have been enjoying some time in front of the TV just to help get my mind off of things and relax for a bit!

**I need to let Mike get back to work - but can't leave without asking him about the laser removals he's had recently:**

I have been going laser-happy lately. I have cover-ups on every part of my body and over time they just seem to show through no matter how good the cover-up was done. So now if I want to cover something that I have on me that I'm not stoked on, I'm going to at least have a few laser treatments to lighten it first, instead of just going straight in for the cover up. In the long run it will look better and you end up getting what you want rather than something that will just work. Lasering is very painful, but goes extremely fast so it makes it bearable. I'm trying to get my neck tattoos completely off and possibly one day, if I get bored, I'll put something back on. I didn't laser my neck because it was bad art, I just want something different! ★



LONDON



LONDON



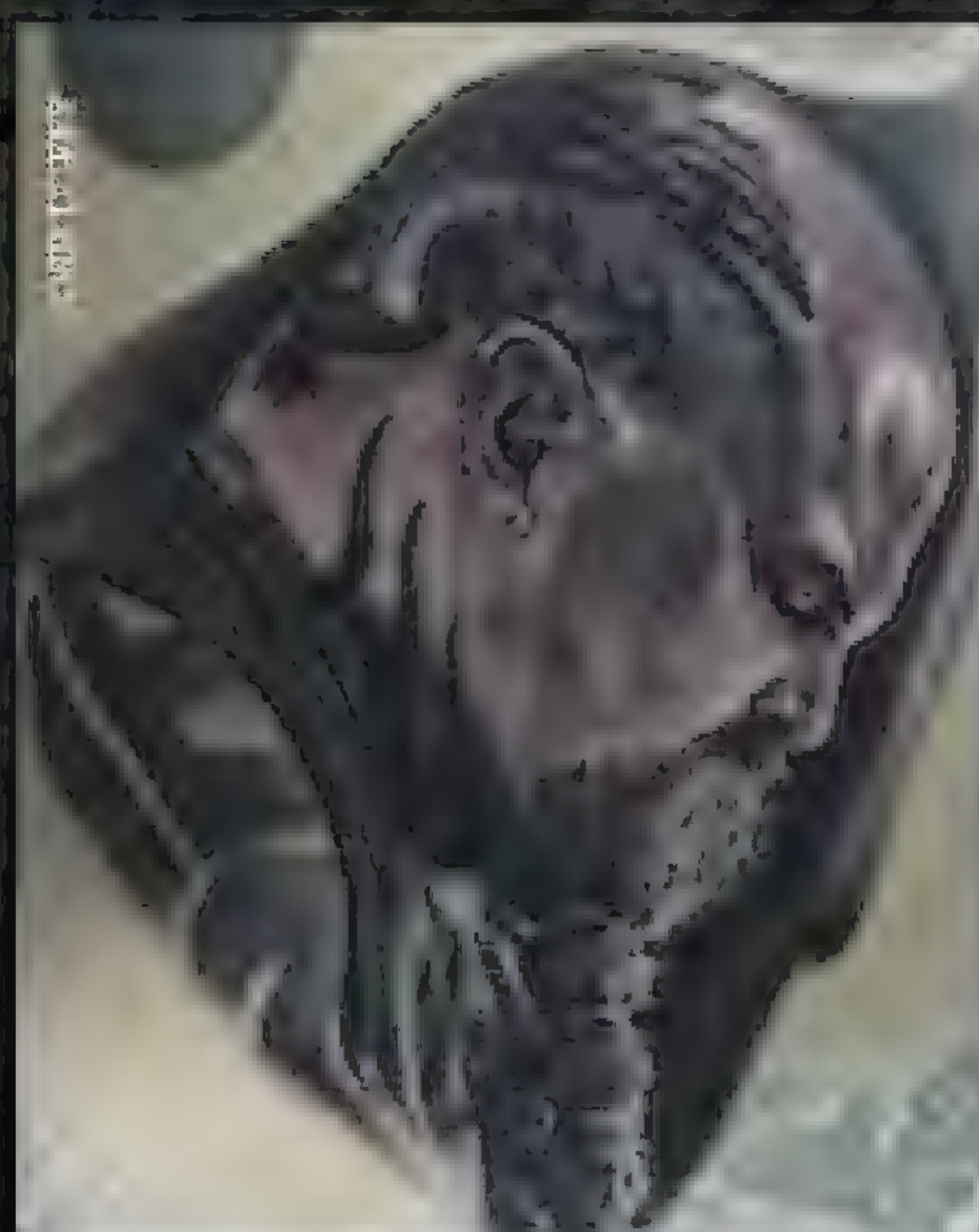
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TALES FROM

# MIDDLE EARTH

WORDS BRENT TAYLOR  
PICTURES ROXY COOKVARE AND MARK DWYER

On the 27 and 28th of November Kentucky State Bourbon and Cola presented the first New Zealand Tattoo and Art Festival at the TSB Stadium in New Plymouth. New Plymouth is a small town on the west coast of the North Island of New Zealand with a rich art history, making it the perfect location for an international tattoo event. The weather turned it on for the artists over the two day festival with many of them taking advantage of the sunshine by going to the beach, hiking up Mt Taranaki, walking Pukekura Park or the coastal walkway, black water caving, fishing and bungee jumping before and after the festival.

With a population of just over 68,000 people, New Plymouth was taken over for the weekend by tattoo artists and enthusiasts, with big billboards up all over the city everyone knew that an international tattoo convention had come to town. The TSB Stadium is a multi-purpose facility that has hosted international sport and concerts such as Slash, INXS and Motorhead which made it the perfect location to hold the 115 booth festival.

The New Zealand Tattoo and Art Festival was billed as the biggest and boldest tattoo event in New Zealand history and it didn't disappoint! With over 150 tattoo artists, retailers, live bands, burlesque, street performers, art exhibitions and more. Artists came from all corners of the globe with big names such as Dan Smith from LA Ink/High Voltage Tattoo in LA returning home for the convention, Sabado, Tebori master Horitsuna from Japan, John Montgomery, Seth Ciferri and



Jen Beirola from America, Gemma Pallat from the UK and Elvis from Germany to name a few. There was also a large Australian contingent lead by Mick Squires, Steve Cross, Stevie Edge, Buggy, Aureole, Rob Abbel, Josh Roelink and Ran Maclurkin coupled with the very best New Zealand artists.

Things were kicked off with an industry only launch party for Western

Magnetic, Seth Ciferri and Marv Lernings new business venture at Club 55 where the artists got to meet each other and catch up with old friends prior to the festival. On Saturday morning the artists were treated to a Powhiri (traditional Maori welcome) before doors opened to the public with a large queue stretching around the building. Not long after the buzz







of tattoo machines could be heard throughout the building and the aisles were packed with tattoo collectors from all over the country. A huge grass area outside the stadium with picnic tables, food and drink vendors, bouncy castle, free face painting and stick on tattoos for the kids provided the perfect place to relax in the sun and watch graffiti artists from New Zealand and Australia

paint a 20 meter wall all day on the Saturday which was later auctioned off for charity.

On both days, large crowds gathered in the far corner of the stadium where the traditional artists where located. Horitsuna from Tattoo Studio Desperado in Japan kept the crowd entertained with tebori, this was the first time a tebori artist has been to

This was the first time a tebori artist has been to an event in New Zealand and the fascinated onlookers couldn't get enough.

an event in New Zealand and the fascinated onlookers couldn't get enough. Located next to Horitsuna was Kura from Soul Signature Tattoo in New Zealand doing hand tapped Maori Ta Moko which was also a crowd pleaser. Other highlights from the internationals were Bobby James from St James Tattoo Malaysia doing a really nice black and grey half sleeve, Nathen Puata from Tatudharma who did an awesome oriental dragon sleeve in the two days, Fabz from Australia, Teniele Napolis amazing black and grey portraits, Sam Rulz, Jaclyn Rehe's old school tattoos, Chris51's crazy colour





CHRIS 61 BRENDANS ARM



Some young guys to stand out were Matt Jordan from Ink Grave tattoo in Christchurch and Calen Paris. Both are names to look out for in the future.

tattoos and in the booth next to him Ran MacLurkin's abstract noir style also proved popular.

New Zealand artists to impress were Dean, Erin and Hamish from Sacred Tattoo, Manu from Jackson St Tattoo with his large scale oriental pieces, Tim Hunt from Pacific Tattoo, Steve Nesbit, Adam Craft and the talented Tattooed Heart contingent, Pepa from Bohemian's realistic style and the entire Skinks crew. Andy Taufiafi's high quality Samoan tattoos, plus the large contingent of Maori Ta Moko artists headed by Rangi and Julie Kipa, Stu McDonald and Hohua Mohi were busy all weekend. Some young guys to stand out were Matt Jordan from Ink Grave tattoo in Christchurch and Calen Paris. Both are names to look out for in the future. There were so many talented local artists that it is impossible to name them all, judging by what was on display over the two day festival, the

New Zealand tattoo industry is in good health and continues to develop at a frantic pace.

On top of the world class tattooing on display was live music from a number of New Zealand bands, with performances by Shotgun Alley, Leeches, The Rabble, Devilskin and Sonic Altar. With genres from rock to hardcore and punk catered for. The entertainment stage was in the main stadium and did get a little loud at times, so next time the live music will be located outside which will no doubt please some artists! Burlesque performers Eva Strangelove and Venus Star were a crowd favourite with street performer Jason Browns juggling chainsaws and straight jacket escapes also popular.

Other highlights were the Nicholas Finance charity skateboard art exhibition and auction with over 50 boards kindly donated by tattoo







The vibe over the weekend was awesome with most just stoked at the opportunity to attend a true international convention in New Zealand.



JASON FROM BLACK DAHLIAS

and other artists on display, which raised \$5000.00 for the local children's hospital. Rangi and Julie Kipa also had a Maori art exhibition with around \$70,000 of carvings on display. There was also a wide array of retail vendors, selling everything from T shirts and hats to pin up photos sessions. For the New Zealand artists it was great opportunity to purchase machines from and chat to Seth Ciferri from Western Magnetic and Jimmy Whitlock from Lucky Supply on their first trip to New Zealand. John Montgomery from Alla Prima Ink also debut his latest product ZION Chinese black ink at the festival.

The tattoo competition was held on Saturday afternoon in front of a big crowd, with a large number of high quality tattoos entered. The judges, John Montgomery, Aureole and Khat Hammond had a hard job to pick a winner in each category. Matt Jordan from Ink Grave Tattoo in Christchurch was the standout artist of the tattoo competition taking out five categories including best of day Saturday with an amazing realistic tattoo machine and the Burger Fuel best of show with a horror themed leg sleeve, which made him the obvious choice for the

Grabaseat best artist of show. Matt took away flights for two to the Pacific Islands or Australia for his hard work. The Central Roofing best of day Sunday was taken out by Aussie artist Teneile Napoli from Garage Ink with a beautiful black and grey portrait.

All of the artists were kept extremely busy over the two days, with many of them booked out months in advance. Some artists received over 100 email requests for work, which has the organisers, Oni Events, looking at a 3 day format for 2012 with more artists and some exciting new entertainment planned. The vibe over the weekend was awesome with most just stoked at the opportunity to attend a true international convention in New Zealand. With over 7000 people through the doors the festival was a huge success and looks set to cement itself on the international tattoo calendar. All of the artists had a fantastic time and judging by the youtube videos also enjoyed the VIP only after party at the Crowded House! ★



EVA STRANGELOVA

## And The Winners Are...

- Best old school**  
Aidan Holland, Forever Art
- Best Realistic/Portrait**  
Matt Jordan, Ink Grave
- Best Oriental**  
Pepa, Bohemian Tattoo Arts
- Best Maori/Pacific**  
Steve Ma Ching
- Best Colour**  
Hades, Tattoo Hades
- Best Black & Grey**  
Matt Jordan, Ink Grave
- Best leg**  
Matt Jordan, Ink Grave
- Best Arm**  
Andy, left hand Path
- Best Back/Chest**  
Feliépe, Skinks Tattoo
- Best of Day Saturday**  
Matt Jordan, Ink Grave
- Best of Day Sunday**  
Teneile Napoli, Garage Ink
- Best of Show**  
Matt Jordan, Ink Grave
- Grabaseat Best Artist of Show**  
Matt Jordan, Ink Grave



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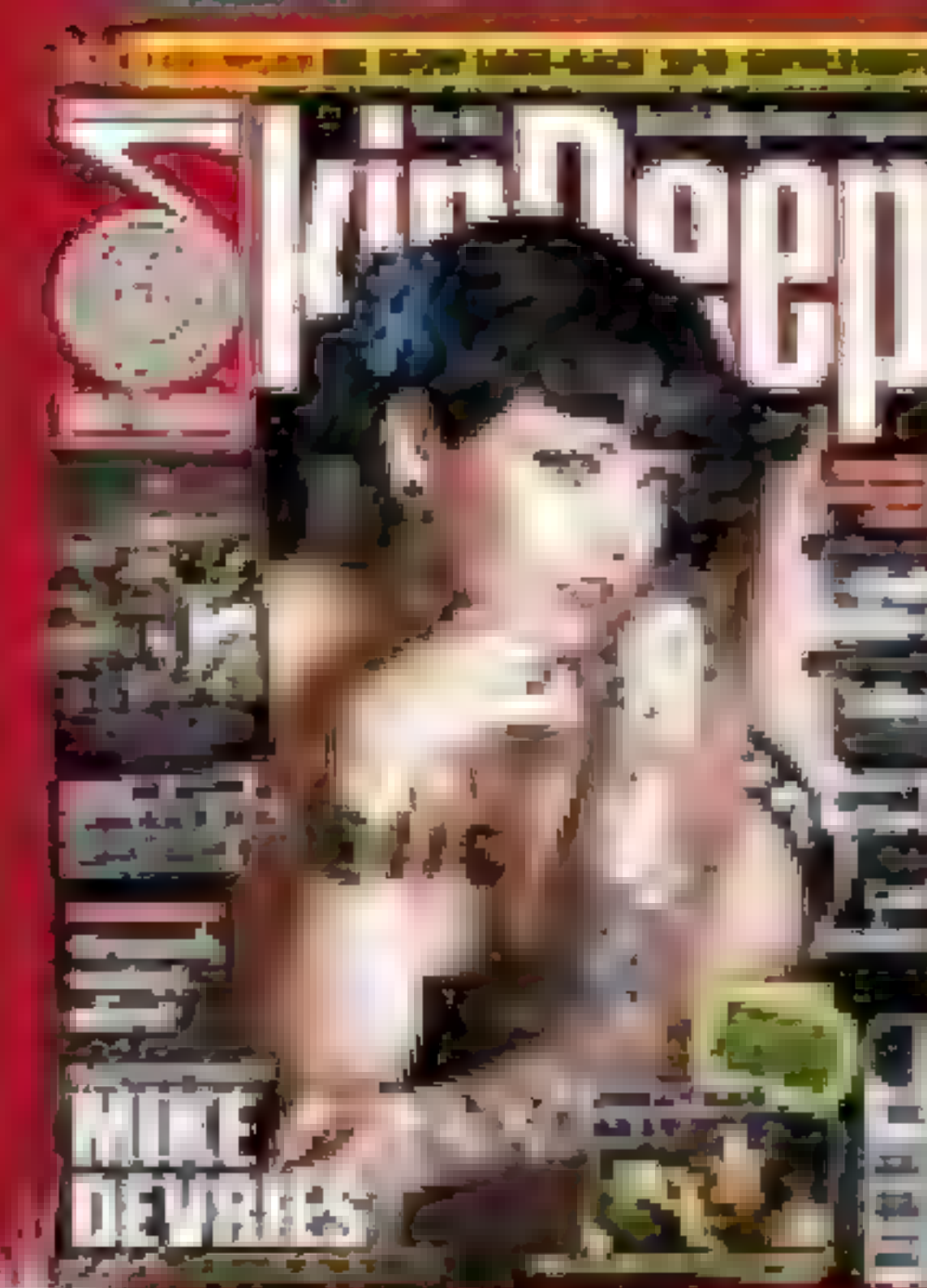
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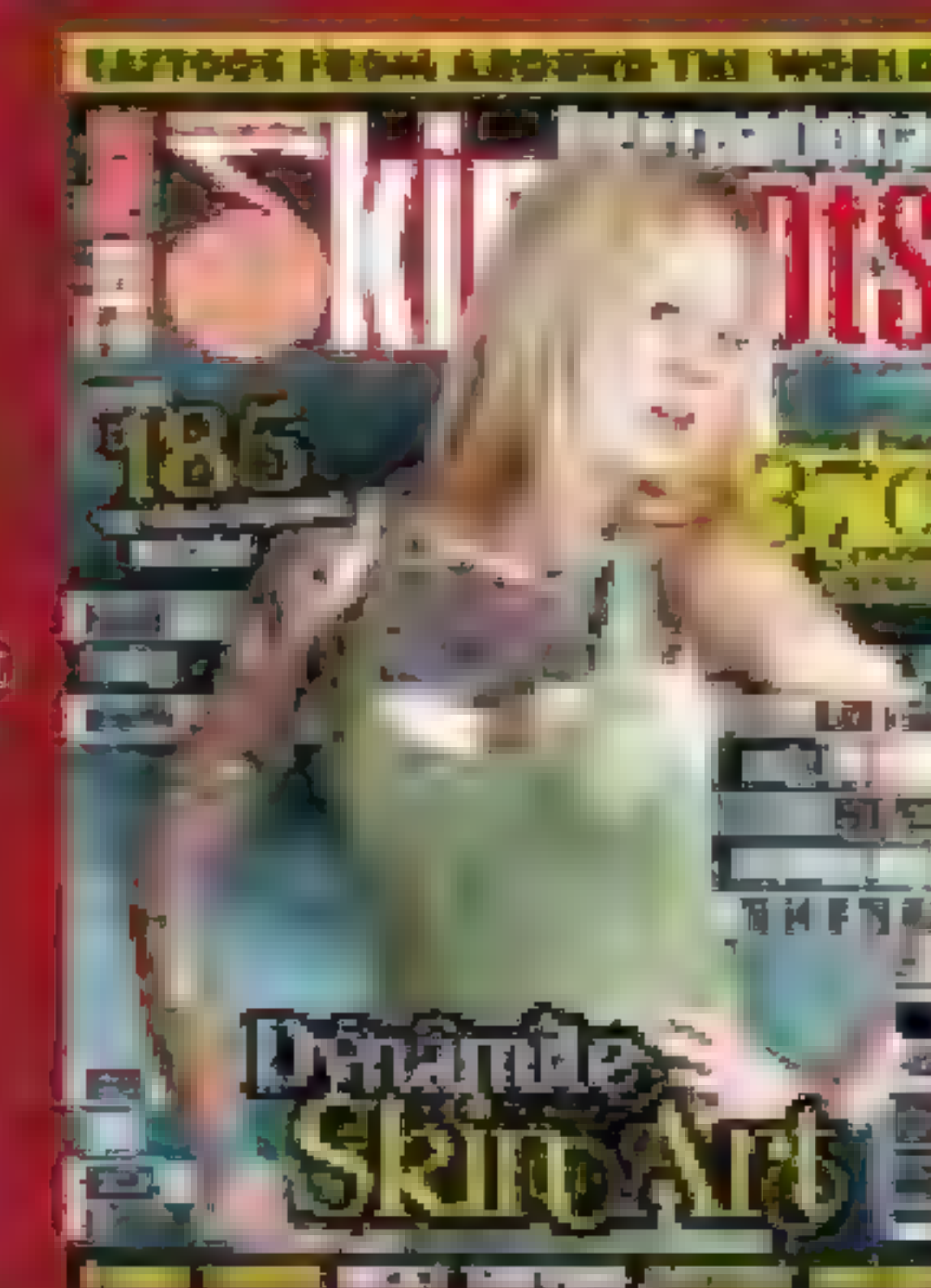
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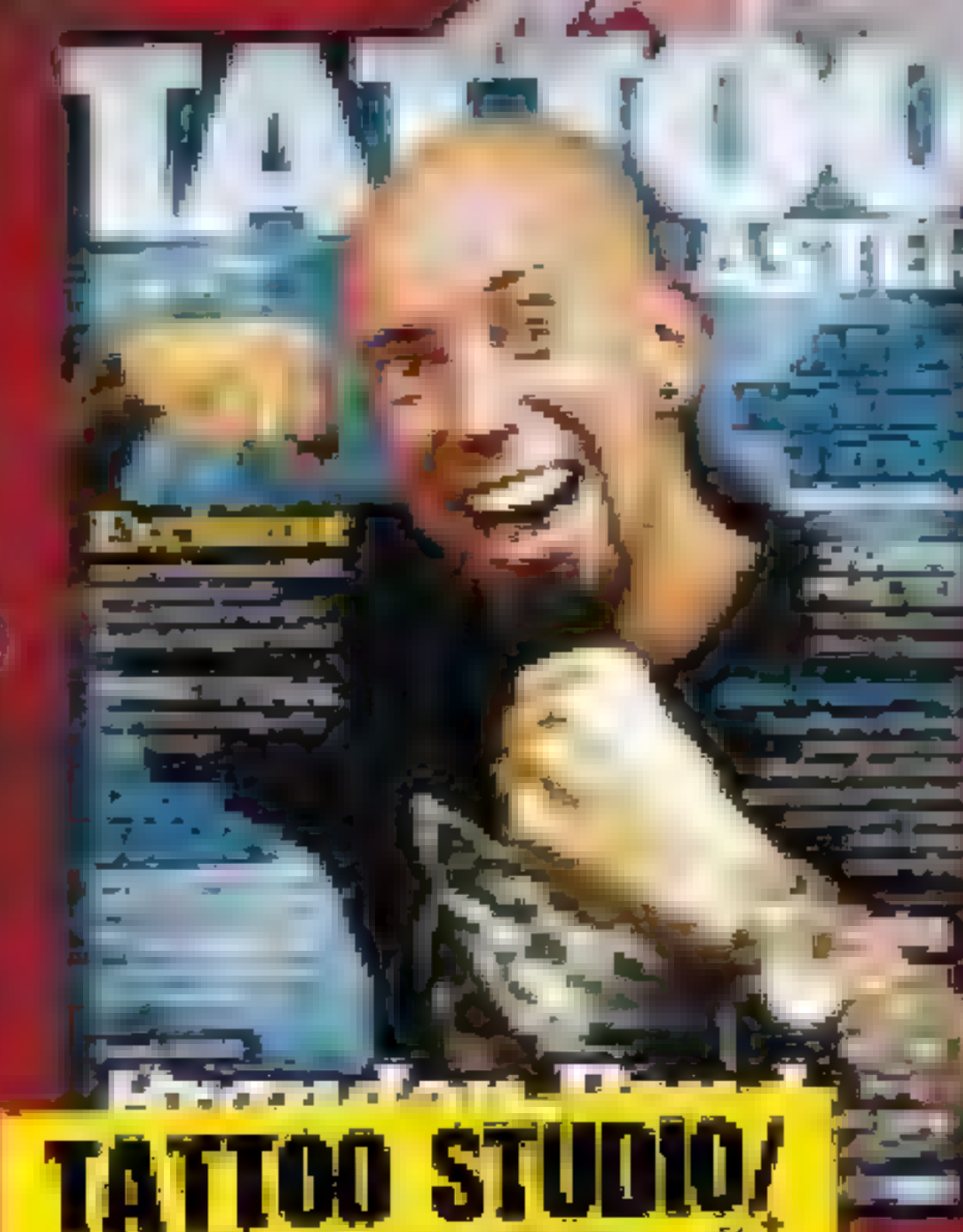
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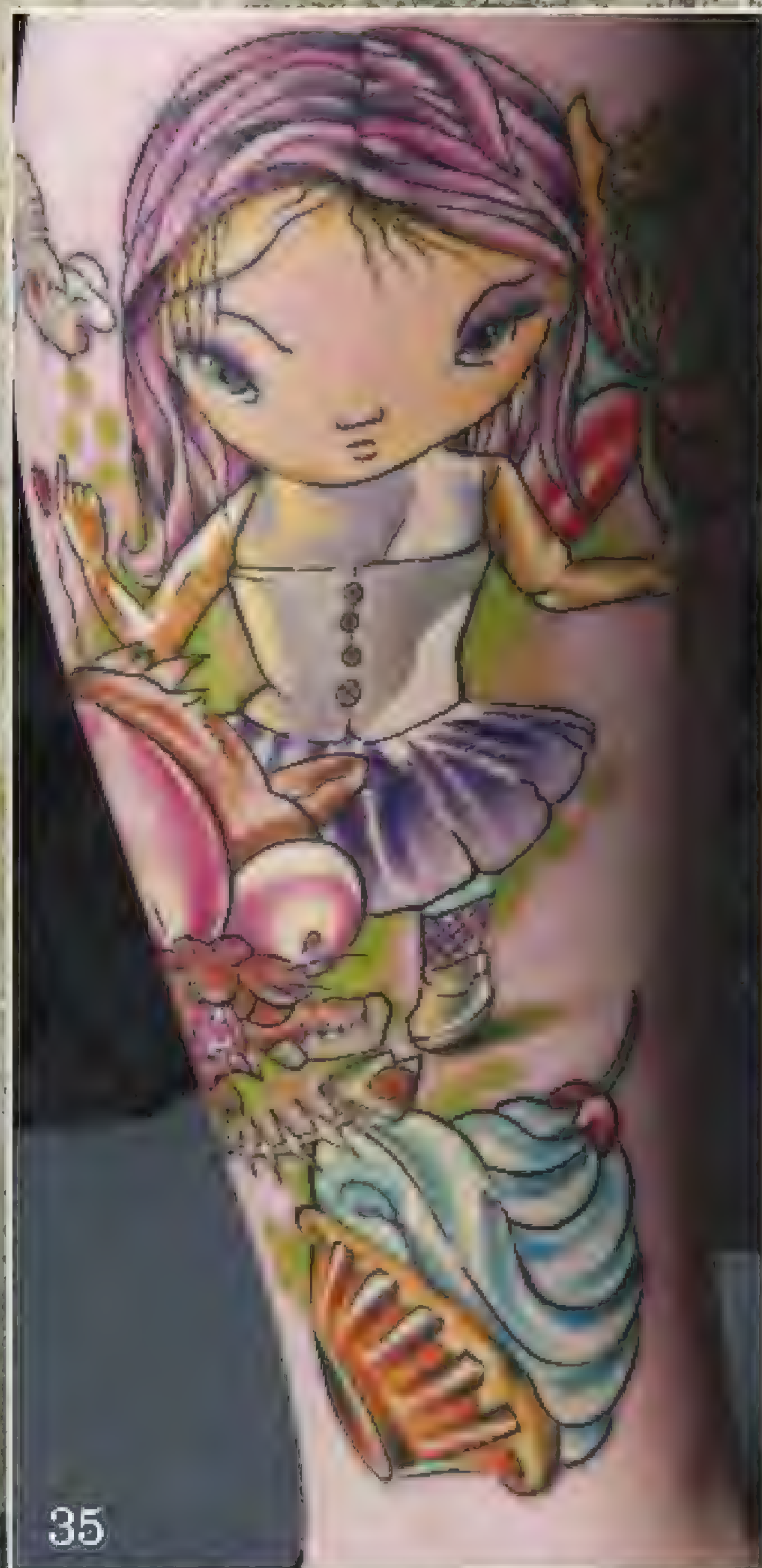




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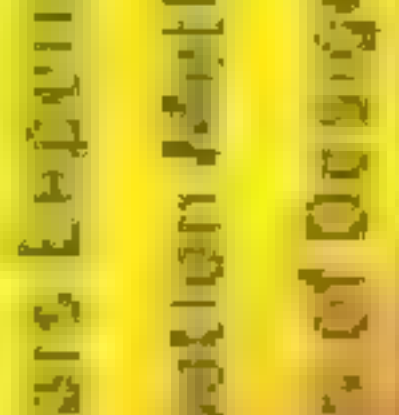
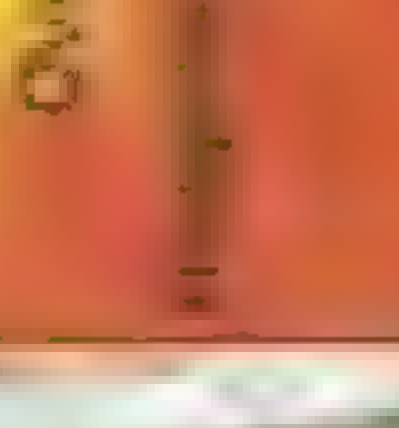

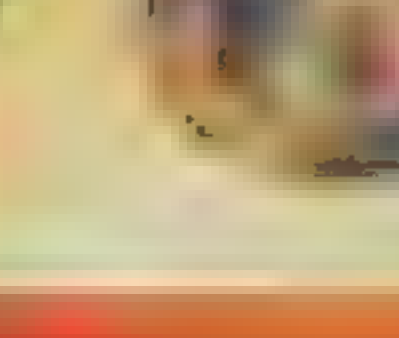
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WORDS &amp; PHOTOGRAPHY: AMY MOIR

# OPERATION Z!

**Set in the heart of Kensington Market, (not that one - this one is in Toronto, Canada), Pearl Harbor Gift Shop is a hidden gem with four talented tattoo artists.** The shop was named after a reference to the Hawaiian Island Harbor that was famously attacked by the Japanese Empire in 1941, which is also just about the time when Japanese tattooing first influenced America and the rest of the world. The shop contains a large array of collectables, vintage signs and photos to unite the theme.

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**B**ill Baker and Daniel Innes opened the studio in May 2010, shortly after, Glennie Well was added to the line up to complete "the original crew." The shop has built a family within the artists and a close community within the market, with the newest artist, India Amara adding to the team.

After looking for space in Toronto for the new studio, Baker and Innes agreed to open the new shop in downtown Toronto's Kensington Market. Imagine Camden Market in London, UK, but more laid back, and full of, let's just say, a more interesting variety of people.

All the artists speak fondly of all the help they received from their friends in the Market to open the business, the

neighbourhood was the main reason for the store location. The shop shows how much time and effort that was put into building it, and any area for improvement is tackled head on.

All the signs outside the shop were hand made by Bill who has proved to be a bit of a handyman - "Bill can build or fix anything but likes to involve everyone in the activity!"

The shop also contains old fixtures that they managed to obtain from the oldest building in the Market neighbourhood, which keeps a sense of the community. This is a shop that's all about family.

## BILL BAKER

Bill was on the first crest of, how he explains; the "rebirth of tattooing" in the late 70's, early 80's which came a

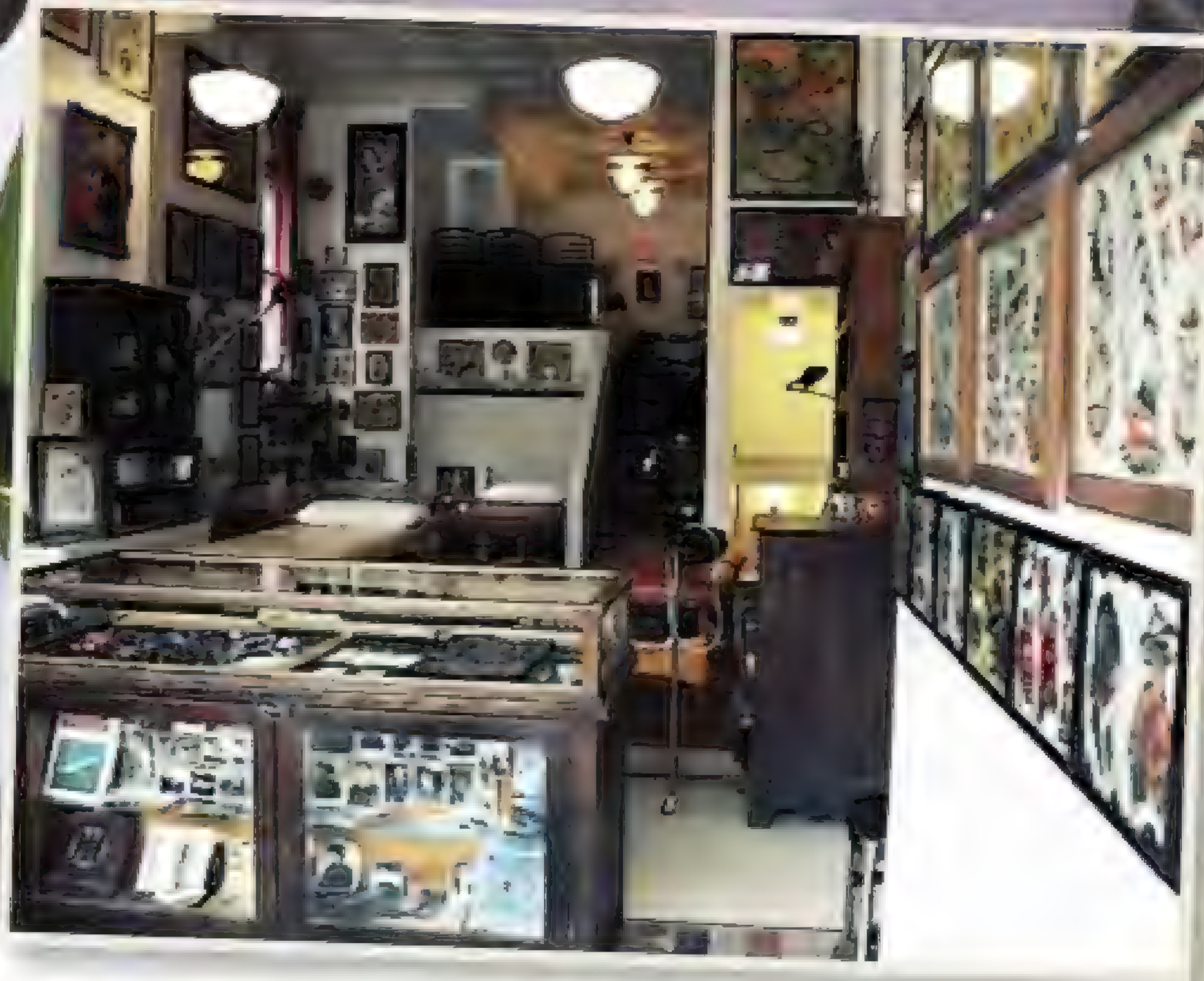


little later to Canada from America.

He was always interested in tattooing and started properly in 1981, his style mostly Japanese - from that era, it was hard to make a living and tattoo artists couldn't afford to specialise in a certain subject, so they would adapt their learning to all styles to simply afford to live. Bill explained that "You tattooed everyone and did everything." He adopted this, to the client's choice. Bill tattooed a lot of other tattooists in the past, but not so much now.

Toronto has been home to Bill since the mid 80's and if it wasn't for Kensington Market, he might have left the city by now.





**BILL WAS ON THE FIRST CREST OF, HOW HE EXPLAINS; THE "REBIRTH OF TATTOOING" IN THE LATE 70'S, EARLY 80'S WHICH CAME A LITTLE LATER TO CANADA FROM AMERICA.**



Previous years were more difficult for the tattoo industry, Bill describes, as they were up against a lot more mechanical problems with the machines.

After owning his previous shop in the 90's, he sold it to fund a research company on the mechanics of tattooing which proved to have a lot of complications. The company was started to purely research needles in the skin and the mechanics of tattoo machines. Bill was sadly forced out of said company and ended up in a two year legal battle with colleagues. During that time, he focussed mainly on the research and tattooed less.

Bill and Daniel had been friends for a long time, and had a lot in common so opening a shop together seemed like a good idea. Both artists had separate private studios during that process. They decided to open Pearl Harbor where Bill had his private studio upstairs, in the Market.

They pushed to claim the whole building and when they had successfully gained that, work started on the shop in January and was successfully opened in May of 2010.

Bill keeps to himself to himself and is admired by his fellow artists. "He's a dream boss."



### DANIEL INNES

Daniel has been tattooing for 11 years, he started young, being inspired by heavily tattooed friends and enthused by music and going to shows. His style is a simple Japanese, older style.

He started tattooing just north of the city in Newmarket at Stinger Tattoo. There he had a very brief introduction to tattooing but unfortunately they had no real time to apprentice him and so in search of an apprenticeship he moved to Toronto six months later to work at Sals Tattoo and Barber shop.

Bill Baker helped Daniel with the technical side of tattooing and in that time Daniel acquired the majority of a Japanese style bodysuit by Bill from the ages of 17 to 20 years old.

Daniel had no formal apprenticeship, but he had continuous help from Bill with the technical side to tattooing as



**"IT'S EASIER TO BE A MEDIOCRE TATTOO ARTIST NOW BECAUSE OF THE INTERNET WHICH MAKES OTHER ARTIST'S WORK - WHO ARE NOT SO TALENTED - LOOK ACCEPTABLE."**



Glennie Well

he started out, and later with his drawings.

He explains "it's easier to be mediocre tattoo artist now because of the internet which makes other artist's work - who are not so talented - look acceptable. It also makes it harder for clients to seek skilled tattooists. But having said this, the exposure on tattooing, on for example TV shows, is proving beneficial towards clientele, to have

so much information about tattooing, it's easier for both parties, but good work always shows if you work hard at what you do" - and it's clear that Daniel has done exactly that.

### GLENNIE WELL

Glennie grew up in Vancouver and had her first tattoo when she was only 15. She was into the punk rock culture and tattoos were the essential accessory. She confesses she was intimidated by going into tattoo shops but knew that she had to behave like a customer and enjoy the art she was purchasing.







## OPERATION Z

Operation Z was the name given to the attack on Pearl Harbor (Hawaii) by the Japanese Imperial General Headquarters. It will live on in history as one of the most underhanded attacks in any wartime history as the Imperial Japanese Navy attacked the naval base of Pearl Harbor on the morning of December 7th, 1941. The attack was the sole reason for the US entering directly into World War 2 and we all know what happened then... Despite numerous historical precedents for unannounced military action, the lack of any warning at all by Japan (whilst negotiations were still ongoing) led President Franklin D. Roosevelt to proclaim December 7th 1941 as "a date which will live in infamy." It's still a great name for a tattoo shop though...

"It made weird sense to me, everyone has their place" and clearly, Glennie's was to tattoo. She spent most of her time as a teenager in tattoo shops and learned more about the rules, structure and shop environment.

She was 25 when first started tattooing, but didn't think she would learn how to tattoo. She started off working the counter for 5 years as she did not have the courage to ask to become an apprentice.

Glennie describes her style as simple but fancy. She specialises in flowers, animals, and inanimate objects.

A lot has been said about the saturation of tattooing, in many people's opinion there are too many tattooists, which might very well be true, and Glennie acknowledges that

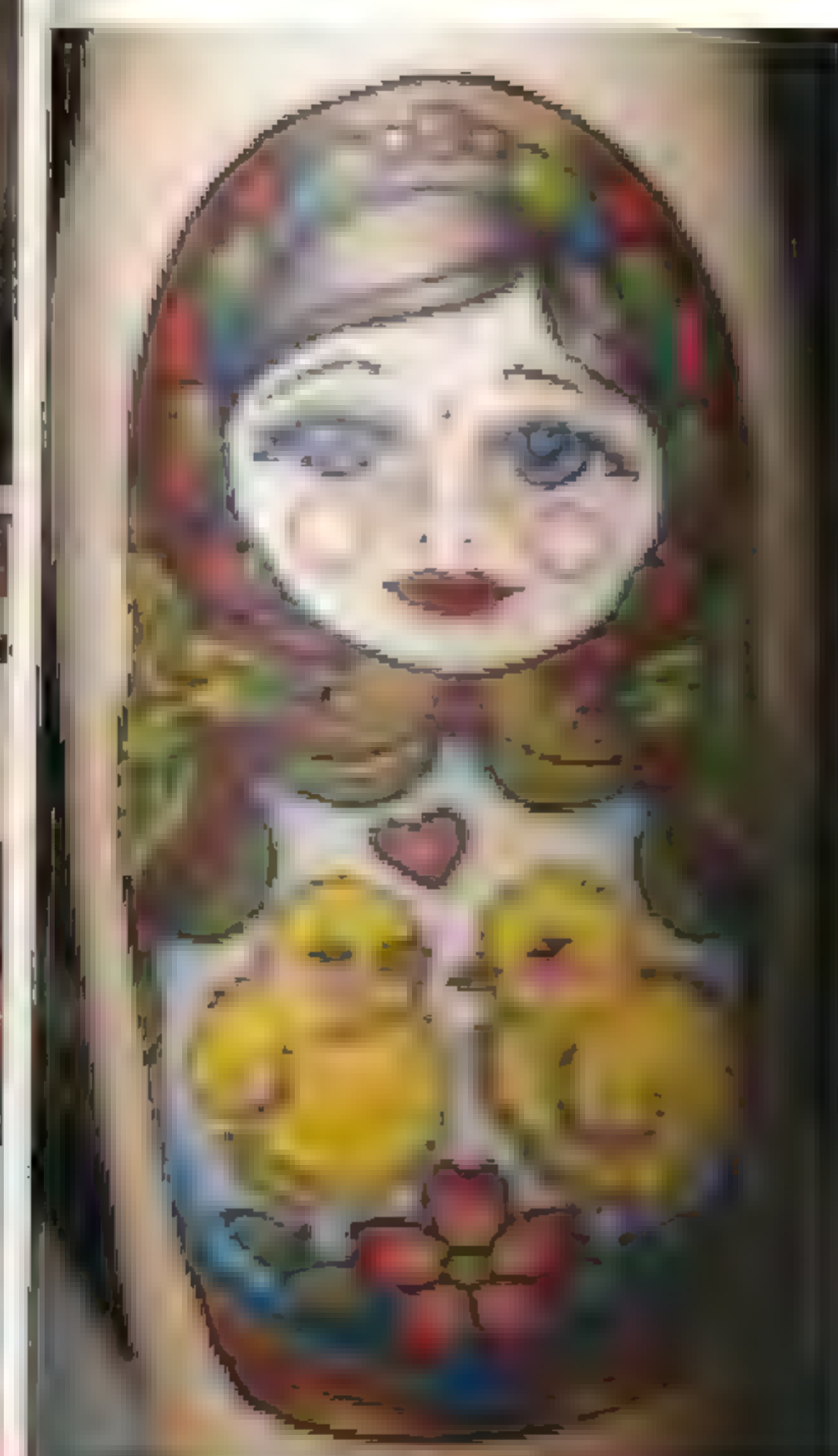
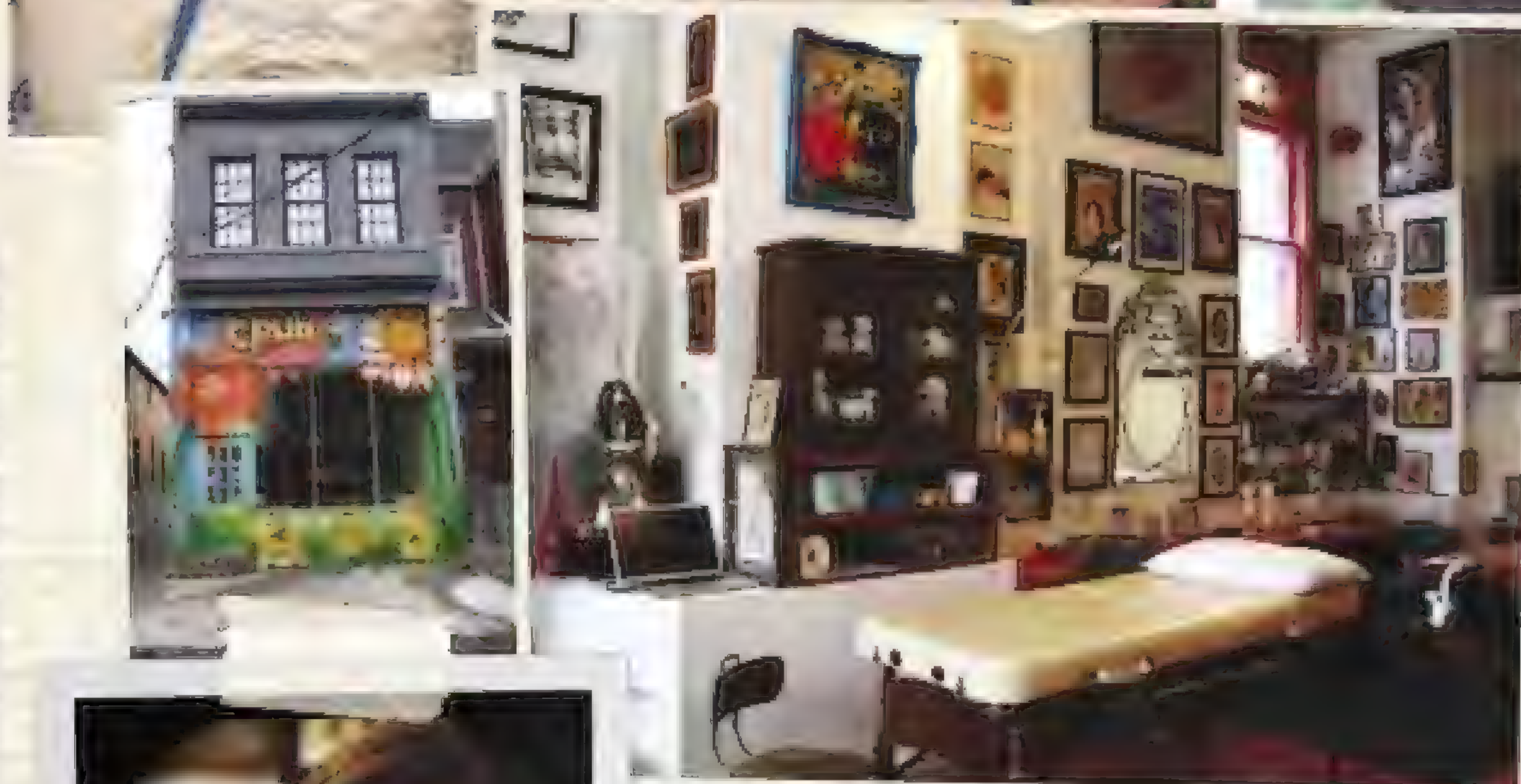
she is one of them.

Bill Baker once told Glennie, "Tattooing can do everything for you, it can give you somewhere to be every day, it can pay your rent, buy you clothes, it gives you a reason to communicate with people outside the normal realm, but, what can YOU do for tattooing?"

That's a motto that Glennie has been following ever since, seeing as there are so many people adding to it and taking from it. It is a part of her job to make sure she evens that direction in a good way.

Visually she is influenced by sign art, fabric, handmade objects and craftwork. Something a human has laboured over, regardless of the result and working at Pearl Harbor, she feels "really lucky - these guys are the best, this shop is so much fun." ☺





India Amara

**WORKING IN KENSINGTON MARKET IS LIKE LIVING ON A LITTLE ISLAND, LIKE NOT LIVING IN TORONTO. "THE DAYS ARE LONGER AND HAPPIER, EVERYONE'S HAPPIER AND CALMER."**

### INDIA AMARA

India Amara is the newest member to the Harbor family, starting in October 2010. She previously worked in New Tribe with Glennie, and through her met Bill and Daniel, which proved an easy transition to Pearl Harbor.

Tattooing for 5 years, India started in Vancouver at Sacred Heart studio,

spent 3 years as an apprentice with Chad Woodley and spent a lot of her time travelling. India feels that her contribution to the shop is a good balance, for her style is more illustrative and so, fills in the gap of the combined artistic abilities within the shop.

She specialises in birds, flowers and nature but enjoys doing a lot of darker

pieces, she likes to be challenged. She gushes that her client base are loyal and have always followed her from previous studios.

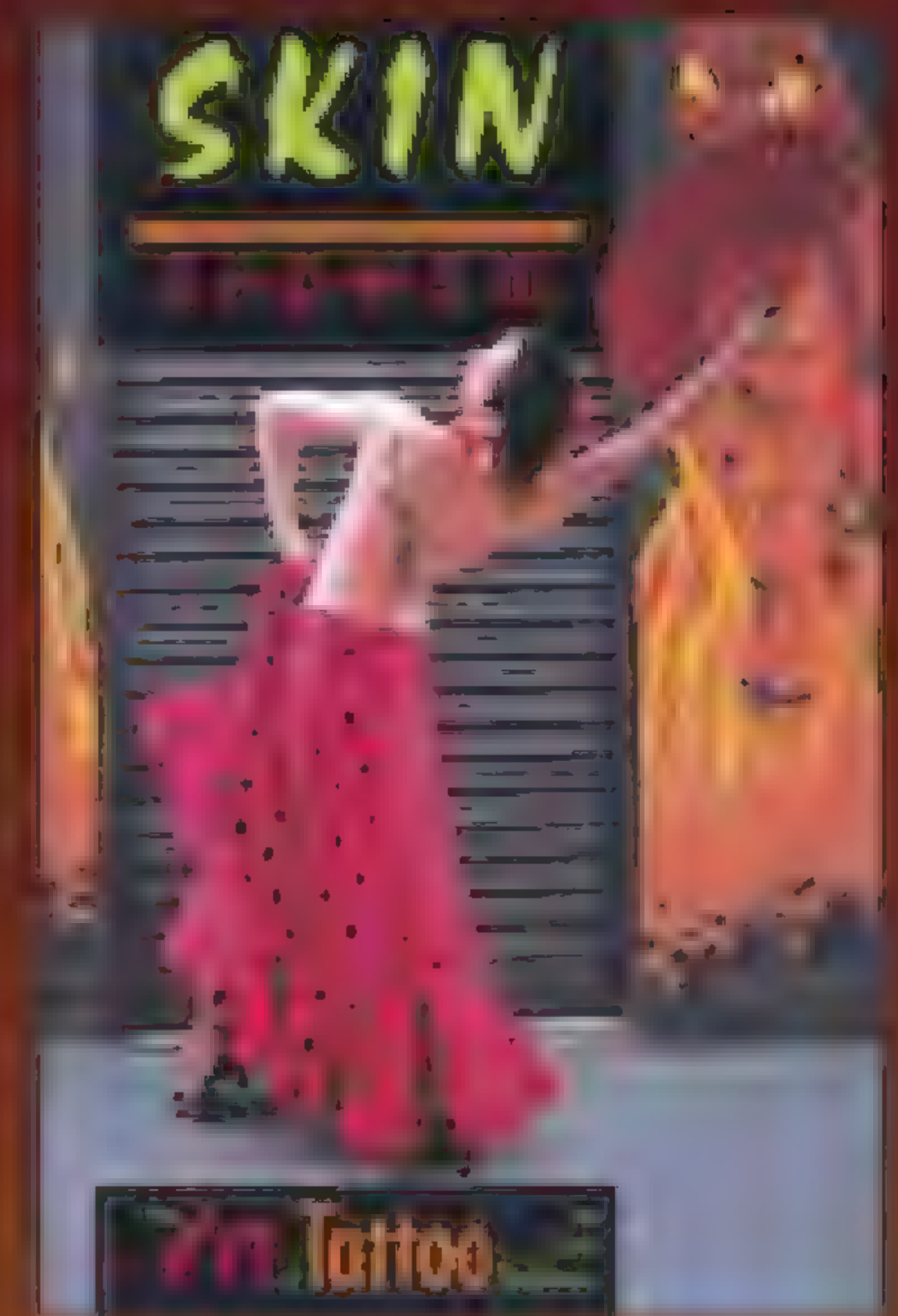
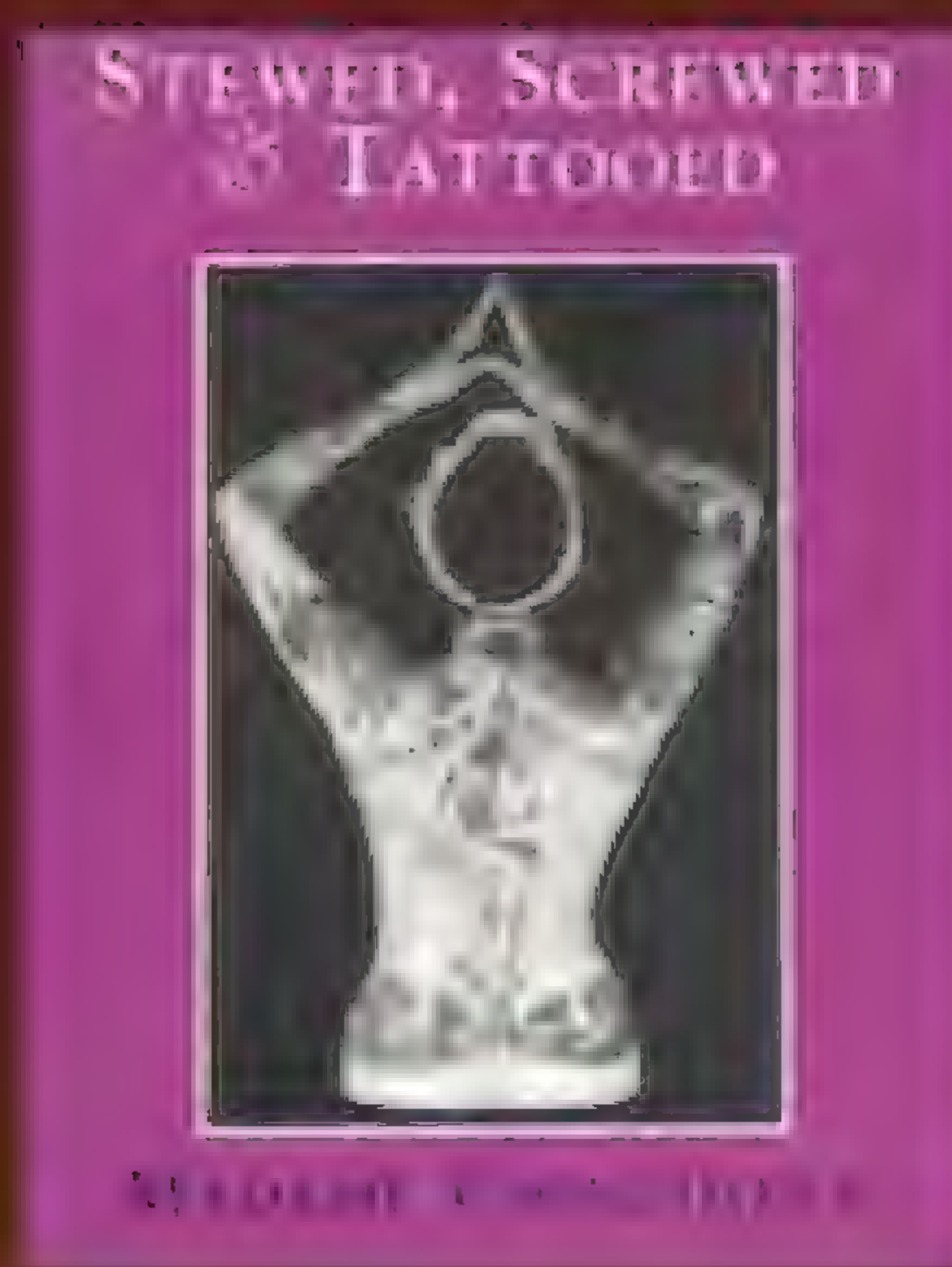
India studied Sculpture and Installation at OCAD (Ontario College of Art and Design) for a short time and feels that modern art is more accessible now and for everyone, there's a shift coming and art will become pure performal.

India has not had a TV since she was 15 so feels a little disconnected from the pop culture – instead, she is inspired by nature and art books and other tattoo artists work.

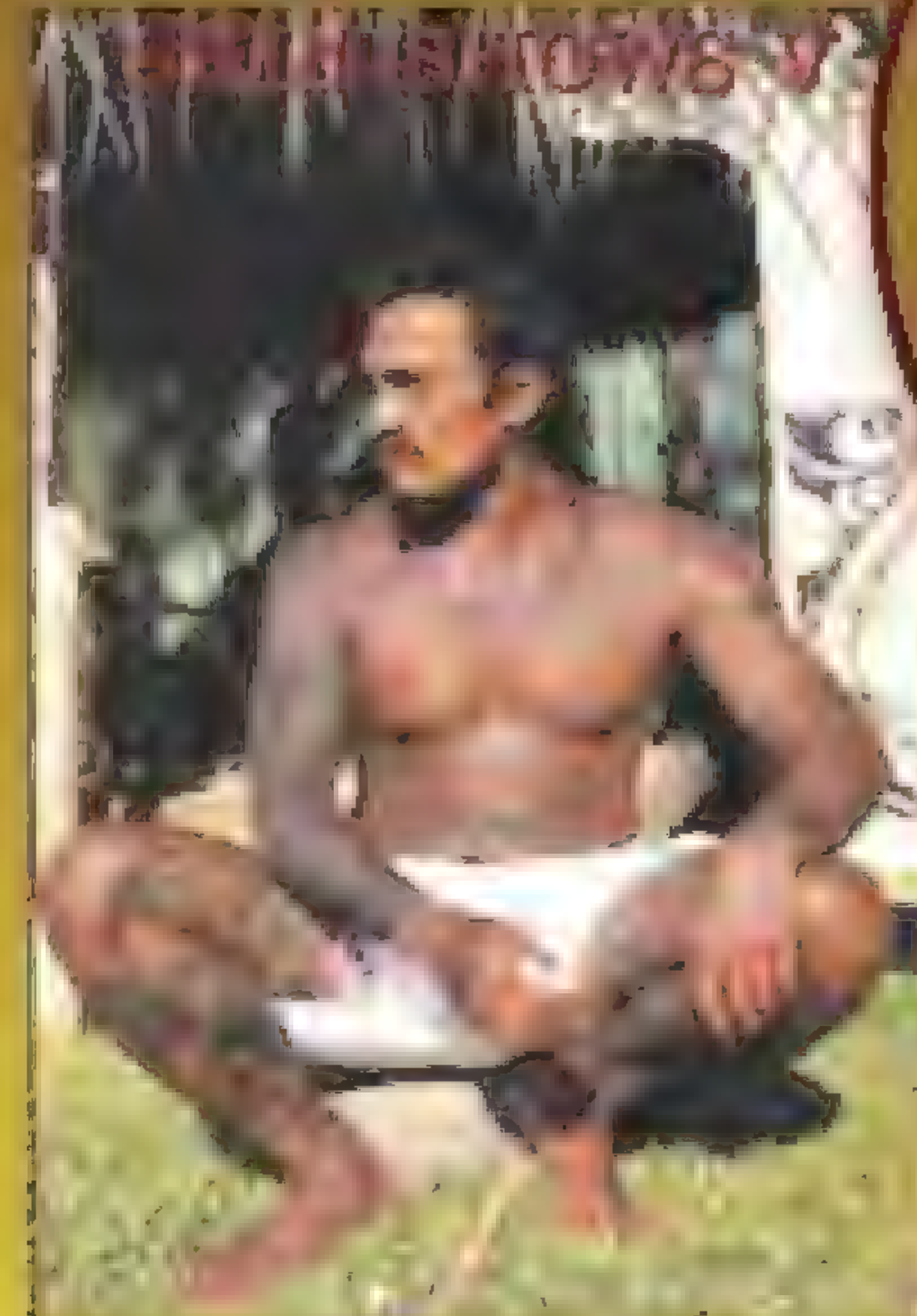
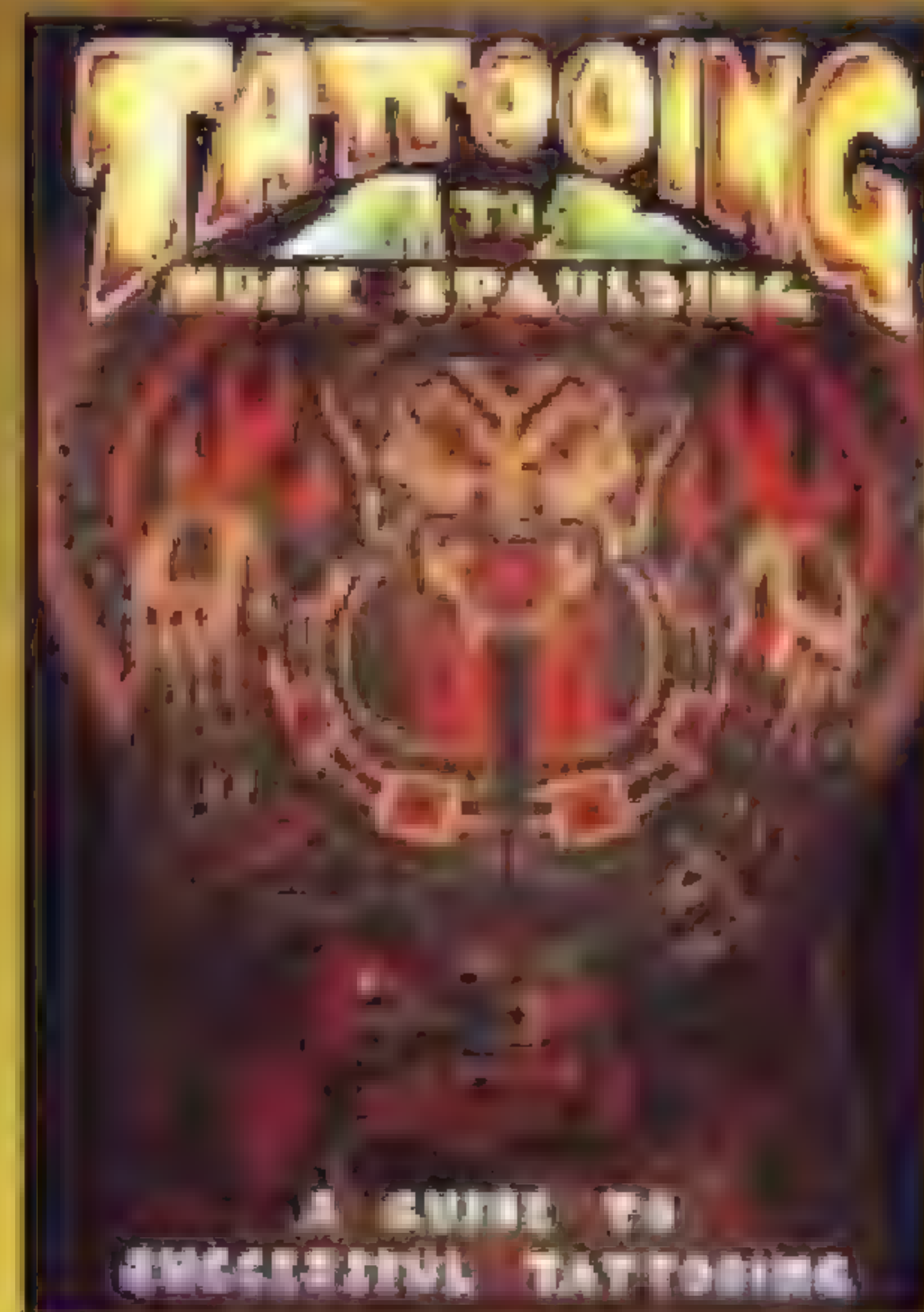
India feels that working in Kensington Market is like living on a little island, like not living in Toronto. "The days are longer and happier, everyone's happier and calmer." ★



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# FINDING NEVERLAND

**The artist Gerald Brom – or simply Brom as he is better known the whole world over – is one the worlds best kept secrets, but it's a secret that's surely to be blown wide open with the release of his latest book *The Child Thief*. What's he doing in *Skin Deep*? Well, a chance conversation led him to a big cupboard where he got out all of the photographs that his fanbase have sent him of his art that they have had tattooed – and that was as good a reason as any for me to get my pen out...**

I'm intrigued. A lot. You hear about this sort of thing happening with bands and collectors who like to hit the big movie iconography but I'd not come across a specific artist being on the hitlist of tattoo collectors – so I ask Brom what the deal is behind it, did somebody send him an image once upon a time that he happened to mention that then prompted a flood more or do they just kind of drift in randomly in isolation from each other? Either way, that's what you call a dedicated fan base...

"They've been drifting in randomly since around '97, after my first art book was published. Art can be a solitary business and I look at it as a form of collaboration between artists. I get a kick out of seeing how my work

translates into ink. For the person being inked, they're choosing to carry my art on their bodies for life. This creates a very personal bond which is why I think they enjoy reaching out to me.

It's the highest form of flattery. Someone choosing to wear your art on their bodies for life? Brilliant. As far as the quality of the tattoos, well that varies widely as you can imagine. Some images certainly translate better than others and of course some tattoo artists are more talented than others – it's worth bearing in mind that I'm a painter and buttery paint effects can be very difficult to translate into skin art – sometimes I'm amazed by what can be achieved on skin."

Looking through the shots, I feel a need to apologise in advance if this



feature chokes up his inbox with hundreds of other Brom tattoos that he never knew about but mid apology, I stop at some of the work that Russian artist Sergey had mailed into him totally unprompted – the back piece in particular is something else – did it generate a slightly smug response from yourself that it could be translated that well?

"What actually happened was that I saw one of his images in a random tattoo post. It was that back piece. I was so blown away that I wrote to him





their muse. I have done plenty of commercial art to keep a roof over my head, especially early on, but of late, yes, I've been fortunate enough to only take on work that I am interested in. This need to follow my muse has a lot to do with why I started writing - before I was limited to only illustrating other peoples ideas, writing novels gives me more freedom to follow my own vision as opposed to someone else's."

Ah - the writing. A u-turn for an artist perhaps but it's no sloppy work of fiction. The Child Thief belongs up there with some the greatest fantasy fiction ever created. It also includes art plates of some of the main chatacters that appear in the book. I ask if this was a concentrated effort on his behalf - that it would be expected of him to include pages like this or did the art come first and generate the direction of the story?

"The Child Thief is my first novel, I also have two fully illustrated novellas. The first being "The Plucker" a children's book for adults, plenty of voodoo and under the bed nasties ☺



through his website and asked if he could send me some high resolution images. He wrote a very flattering note back saying he was a huge fan. I have to say the feeling is mutual - but it wasn't the only one he has done."

Long term fans will be aware of Brom's history - which prior to the release of The Child Thief most notably means his work with role playing games and his work at Dark Horse comics - but does he feel like he's left parts of his past behind and is now able to control what he does a little bit more now in the way of being able to pick and choose what he does for a living?

"The goal of any artist is freedom to create what they want. To follow





fucking with toys in the land of make-believe. The second "The Devil's Rose" - I call it my romantic western set in Hell. Plenty of undead being wonderfully awful to one another. Those two were a balance between the paintings and art. With The Child Thief I wanted to branch out and try writing a novel reliant on prose first. So even though there are plenty of images, the story is told through the text.

A couple of years back I read James Barrie's original version of the tale and was amazed at all the underlying darkness. Here's a quote from the original Peter Pan: *"The boys on the island vary, of course, in numbers, according as they get killed and so on; and when they seem to be growing up, which is against the rules, Peter thins them out; but at this time there were six of them, counting the twins as two."*

Thins them out? What does that mean? Does Peter kill them, like culling a herd? Does he send them away somewhere? If so, where? Or does Peter

**I HAVE ALWAYS WANTED TO GET A TAT, BUT COULD NEVER DECIDE ON WHAT TO GET. I DO PLAN ON GETTING SOMETHING BEFORE I DIE. ALSO, I HAVE A VERY OBSESSIVE PERSONALITY AND AM AFRAID THAT ONCE I STARTED I WOULD NEVER STOP.**







## BROM

Born in the deep dark south in 1965, Brom, an army brat, spent his entire youth on the move and unabashedly blames living in such places as Japan, Hawaii, Germany, and Alabama for all his afflictions. From his earliest memories Brom has been obsessed with the creation of the weird, the monstrous, and the beautiful.

At age twenty, Brom began working full-time as a commercial illustrator. By twenty-one, he had two national art representatives and was doing work for such clients as Coke, IBM, Columbia Pictures and CNN. Three years later he joined the art staff at TSR and entered the fantasy field he'd loved his whole life. There he contributed his unique vision to all the fantastic worlds of Dungeons and Dragons as well as creating the highly dramatic look and feel of the best-selling Dark Sun world.

In 1993 Brom returned to the freelance market and since that time his distinctive works have graced all facets of the creative industries, from novels and games, to comics and film, working on such notable titles as: World of Warcraft, Magic the Gathering, Diablo, Doom, Batman, Galaxy Quest and Tim Burton's Sleeping Hollow. Most recently he's created a series of award winning horror novels that he both writes and illustrates. "The Plucker" (a horrifying adult children's book) and "The Devil's Rose" (a modern western set in Hell). Brom will be signing at the Spectrum booth promoting his latest novel, "The Child Thief", a gritty, nightmarish retelling of the Peter Pan myth.

Brom is currently kept in a dank cellar somewhere in the drizzly Northwest. There he subsists on poison spiders, centipedes, and bad kung-fu flicks. When not eating bugs, he is ever writing, painting, and trying to reach a happy sing-a-long with the many demons dancing about in his head. If you would like to learn more about Brom's particular brand of devilry, the Child Thief, or future conceptions go to: [www.bromart.com](http://www.bromart.com).

just put them in such peril that the crop is in need of constant replenishing?

That one paragraph forever changed my perception of Peter Pan from that of a high-spirited rascal to something far more sinister. How many children had Peter stolen, how many had died, how many had been thinned out? Peter himself said, "To die will be an awfully big adventure." Once I pondered these unsettling elements I began to wonder what this children's book would be like if the veil of Barrie's lyrical prose were peeled back, if the violence and savagery were presented in grim stark reality. How would children really react to being kidnapped and thrust into such a situation? How hard would it be for them to fall under the spell of a charismatic sociopath, to shuck off the morality of civilization and become cold-blooded killers?"

So, what's next? I would venture a guess that the feedback has been good from the book and that another is expected from the public, his publisher and fans alike in the not too distant future.

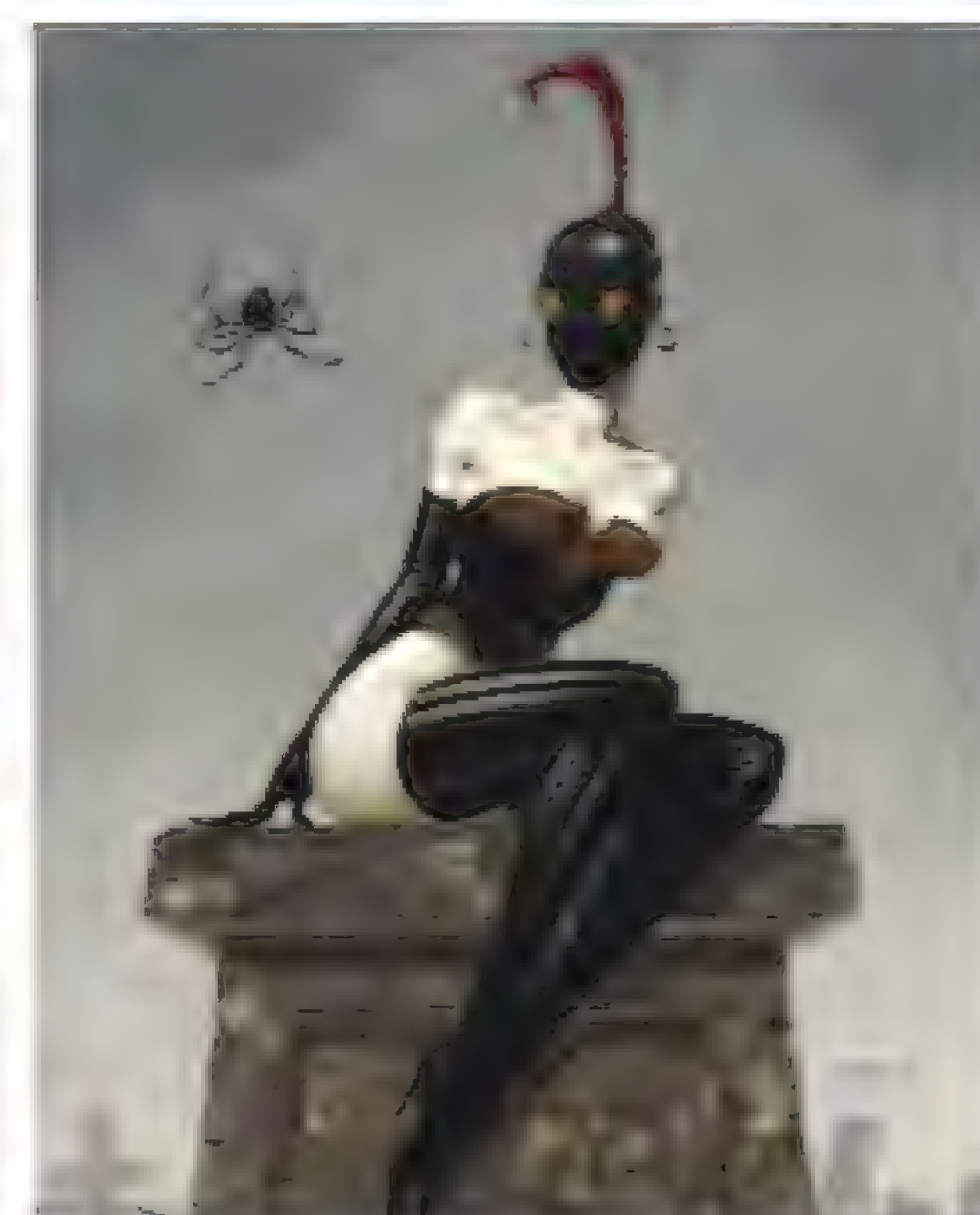
"I've just signed a two book deal with EOS/Harper Collins, the publisher of The Child Thief. Along with a new art book on the way. Now I just have to get my butt in my studio and make some stuff!"

And is he still a pencil and paper kind of guy or has he succumbed to the siren calls of PhotoShop?

"You know, digital art has revolutionised the art of illustration. This comes with trade-offs both good and bad. The computer can make an average painter good, and sometimes a good painter average, in other words using the exact same tools, and exact same technique can often homogenize art. There are plenty of exceptions to







**DIGITAL ART HAS REVOLUTIONISED  
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GOOD, AND SOMETIMES A GOOD  
PAINTER AVERAGE.**

this. These digital tools have flooded the market with more talent and thus each artist has to strive to find their own unique niche. For me this was expressed in my fiction, I focused on my ability to bring a world to life with both pictures and words combined."

Like Brom, I have a real love for Frank

Frazetta's work - it was pretty sad to lose him last year - we follow the train of thought and turn a corner that leads us into a conversation about how the world is such a different place now that the likelihood of having an artist become as iconic as he was is very slim, to say the least. Personally, I don't see media being collected and treated the same way as it was when we were kids (we're about the same age). I discovered his work in second hand bookstores and dove in from that direction, but that sort of "browsing" culture really doesn't exist any more... thoughts Sir?

"A talent like Frank only comes around every hundred years, but even so, I often contemplate this very point. When we were kids there were a few

very focused outlets for fantastic art, the good thing about this was that I was aware and could keep up with everything in the genre, could name every artist in the business. Now I am overwhelmed by the venues and have fallen behind on who is doing what. Even when I was building my career, the amount of artists working and the smaller venues helped make it easier to establish my name, or at least the path was more apparent and focused. It would be daunting to try and do that now."

Which I believe is where we come in - exactly the same is happening in the tattoo world. It takes a sharp cookie to keep track of everything going on in the world now that everything is louder than everything else. ★





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# THE FAMILY GUY

As with any serious career path, Philip Holt's path began with hurdles. Some of those hurdles were major and some of those hurdles were minor.



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Some obstacles might have been big enough that they would knock you off track for a few years, maybe even set you on another road but that wasn't the case with Philip Holt. If anything the big hurdles pushed him harder to make his mark on the world.

Phil had set his mind on being a tattooist from an early age. "Tattooing seemed to grab my attention when I was around thirteen and it seemed the obvious career choice," he says, "Both my parents were actively pushing me towards a career in art, my mother being a career artist, but tattooing just felt right."

When Phil was sixteen he met Reid Daughtry, ten years older and "a friend

of a friend". Daughtry was already an established biomech tattooist and all through high school, Phil would spend his time eagerly watching Daughtry tattoo at his Tampa studio. Eager as the young student was, it was only a year after he had been out of school, that Phil actually began using the information he had received from his teacher and started tattooing. "Reid Daughtry got me started on the path of being a tattooist and then within weeks of me actually making tattoos he passed away and the rest of the path was a solo mission." A tough break by anyone's standards but even more so with Daughtry and Phil having become such close friends.

Phil then made the decision to hit the road, travelling between studios, studying other tattooists and ultimately

honing his craft. "I got married in 1998, when I was 21, and immediately had a son. At the time my wife and myself were living in Florida and our families were scattered around the US so travelling wasn't a problem. I started out working in Ohio during 1998 and then between 1999 and 2001 I was lucky enough to work at Deluxe Tattoo in Chicago with Ben Wah, Dennis Halbritter, Harlan Thompson and Tim Biedron. Then it was off on to San Jose to work with Adrian Lee, Adam Barton, Paco Excel, Ron Erhart and Matt Shamah at New Skool Tattoo."

Finally, in 2003, after "dragging his wife and son around the globe for the last five years" Phil decided to open his own studio and he returned to his hometown of Tampa to launch Redletter1. "When my second son was





**THEY DON'T EVEN NOTICE I MAKE TATTOOS... THEY HONESTLY DON'T EVEN CARE ONE BIT. I COULD BE A BANKER OR WORK AT THE MALL. THEY ARE FAR MORE IMPRESSED WITH BOOKS AND LEGO, DOLLS AND BOUNCY BALLS.**

born my wife wanted to move back to Tampa. The plan was for us to move to Tampa and for me to travel back and forth between San Francisco to work with Grime and New York with Troy Denning. That lasted for a good couple of years and then my daughter was born and my travelling dropped off immensely."

Having four kids of my own, I veer off course for a few minutes and ask Phil what they think of their Dad being

a tattooist. "They don't even notice I make tattoos... they honestly don't even care one bit. I could be a banker or work at the mall. They are far more impressed with books and lego, dolls and bouncy balls."

I can fully understand and appreciate where Phil is coming from on this point. My kids are far more impressed that I can clock Super Mario Galaxy than the fact that I am a writer. But this is not a bad thing in some ways we joke,

at least our kids keep us grounded. Carrying on, Phil quick to point out that having kids does make you look at life differently. "It changes my work habits by both making me work a ton, while at the same time forcing me to relax and go to the park. Just have fun and relax."

With his parents initially trying to steer him more to a career in art than



THE  
FAMILY  
GUY



he would rather be known for his art or his tattooing. "I couldn't chose between tattooing and painting any more than I could say I prefer jujitsu to fishing as hobbies. One is not greater than the other as they serve different needs. Tattooing is more restrictive as the client has ultimate direction of the job. Painting has more freedom which in my opinion makes it far harder as one has to develop ones voice and then the subject matter requires more thought on the ground level. The canvas doesn't tell you it wants a dragon, you have decide what the canvas needs for yourself."

Phil's answer is full of the duality that I see in him, it is as if there is a constant balancing act taking place. You only have to look at his style of tattooing and then his style of painting to see it and I reckon anyone would be hard pressed to say they were created by the same person. At es Phil so good at what he does, his ability to separate aspects of his life that are inevitably combined.

Getting back on track, I ask Phil if tattooists and painting have always been linked or if this is a new trend developing. "It's seems to me that it has always been the case. Ed Hardy was a painter, Sailor Jerry painted, Bob Wicks, Akamatsu...it doesn't seem new to me."

We move onto how tattooing is quickly making it's mark on the mainstream arena. "I've always been amazed by tattoos and it makes sense to me that now, most people are catching



### OLD GOLD

Not only is Philip an accomplished artists and tattooist, he has also entered the world of making colour ink pigments under his own brand - Old Gold. "Basically I became tired of powder pigment companies switching their colours around. I got so discouraged with it all that I started mixing bulk pigments myself. All of it is handmade by me personally. I mix it exactly the same way that I have for the last eleven years, only now instead of making one gallon - I make a hundred gallons."

"So I mix all these pigments in small rock tumblers - dozens and dozens of them at a time, with each colour tumbler usually lasting for nine months."

And because Phil uses Old Gold himself, he is able to see first hand what works and what doesn't work. "Tattooing with them day in and day out, I have come to hone in the exact consistency and flow that I like for my own use. To cook the pigment to the consistency I desire, I do not use isopropyl alcohol which is hard for the body to break down, instead I use Ketel One Vodka which is charcoal distilled and easily digested by the body. Another thing, my personal belief, is that Chinese pigments are cheap and sub par. I prefer to use the best of the best and is exactly what you'll get in Old Gold."

[www.oldgoldsmallbatch.com](http://www.oldgoldsmallbatch.com)

tattooing, I ask Phil what he would do if one of his kids wanted to be a tattooist. "I will encourage my children to do anything they want...so long as it's an honest path!" I nod in silent agreement, wise words for any parent to follow.

Slowly our conversation heads back to Phil's studio, Redletter1. "It was simply a private studio at first but it started to grow and then there were multiple tattooists working with me. At the moment it's Jeff Srsic, Angelo Nales and Nick Stegall." I interrupt Phil to ask him if he has an apprentice at the studio. "I do not have an apprentice nor will I. It's too much responsibility. I

don't think others having an apprentice is good or bad, I supposed it all depends on how they handle it and since I've never had one I'd be arrogant to say I know exactly how it should be handled."

I let Phil get back to talking about the studio. "So on top of this, I was also hosting month gallery exhibits and weekly figure drawing workshops. The travelling was quickly becoming less desirable. And I also really love Tampa and I enjoy being here so I started to travel less and less."

This leads on to another passion of Phils painting and I ask him whether





on to the whole scene. The only problem is that, with the art moving into the mainstream, there follows a lot of bad tattooists. But it's all subjective. I can look at some young scamp and think poorly of his art the same way Aaron Cain can think poorly of my biomech... Aaron is better period but I still have the right to do what I can and try hard don't I?"

I find it hard to argue the point with Phil because, if I am honest with myself, his views are quite refreshing in an industry that can sometimes be elitist. "If people suck at what they do that only matters to them and their clients... it is not really my business. Plus some of my favourite people, who I find dear and genuine, are horrific tattooists. Sometimes I might tell them they suck but ultimately I'm blessed they do what they do even though they do it poorly. Does that make sense?" I nod a bit unsure so he adds, "If they were great financial analysts versus bad tattooists I wouldn't even know them and therefore wouldn't benefit from their friendship!"

I ask Phil if he has a particular style he enjoys tattooing the most or that he feels he identifies with. "Reid, who got me started in tattooing, was mainly a biomech tattooist. This was back in 1993...he must have died in...oh I don't know Jan 1997...so in general tattooing was much different in the mid nineties than it is now. But his work was brilliant. He was one of those guys that set the tone that tattooing was always custom. That I needed to draw and paint and for him it was all biomech. A big chunk of that is still there so I spend a lot of time doing biomech. I also enjoy Japanese style a lot, however I do not consider myself a traditional Japanese tattooist at all. Ultimately I try to accomplish whatever the client needs and do it as good as I can."

This leads us, in a round about way to "bedside manner". I mention a few tattooists I have been to that stick you down in the chair and get on with the job, all conversation being cut short. This cold, get on with business approach, it's something I dislike in a tattooist as to me the banter, it is part of the whole experience...and it helps take your mind off the pain of a long sitting. Or as Phil puts it, "Bedside manner is huge, to say it is not, is simply arrogance. Each client is what gives us the opportunity to work and grow, the least we can do is be nice to them." Phil pauses a second before adding, "Look, I'm not saying that we need to do cartwheels and please their every wish but we can have fun and be pleasant with out being entertainment slaves." And what of the ones who will make it difficult no matter how courteous you are I ask?

"...of course there will always be exceptions as some people are impossible and those people? I let them



**BEDSIDE MANNER IS HUGE, TO SAY IT IS NOT, IS SIMPLY ARROGANCE. EACH CLIENT IS WHAT GIVES US THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK AND GROW, THE LEAST WE CAN DO IS BE NICE TO THEM.**

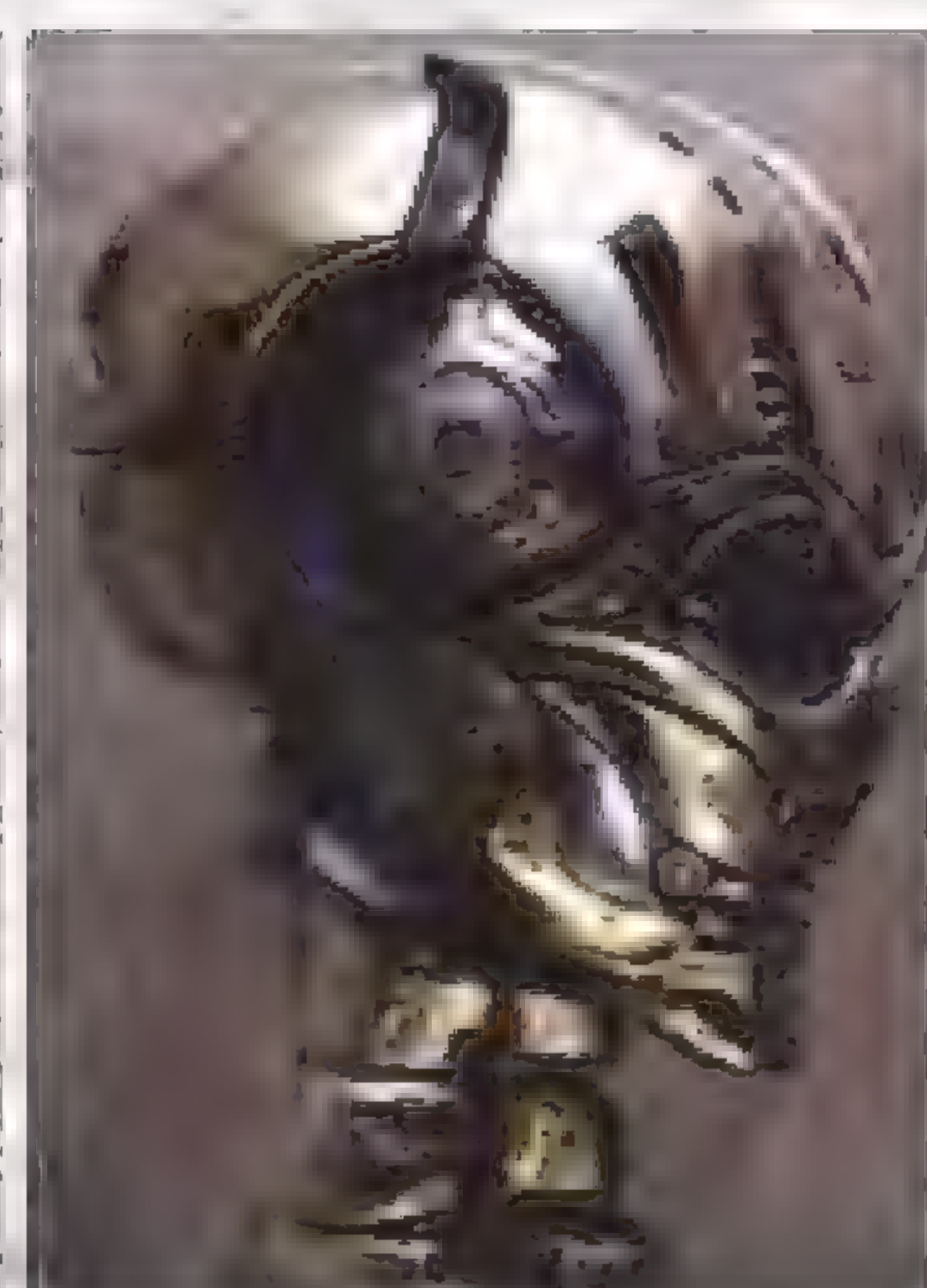
get tattooed else where."

Heading towards wrapping up the interview, I ask Phil how he unwinds, how he cuts loose. "How do I get wild? Ha...that is funny." I am not sure why I have amused the man so much but all is revealed with his answer. "I read theological books and help out at church. I don't drink anymore, haven't been to a live band show in years...

most of my time is spent tattooing and painting. Seriously! Is that wild enough?" I understand the funny side of it now. Like Joe Public and their preconceived ideas of tattooing and tattooists, I fell into the trap of expecting Phil to say he spends his time ripping up the streets on his custom built Harley or hitting the bars around Tampa with his tribe of inked up ☺



# THE FAMILY GUY



## TERMINATOR

Rising out of the ashes of the eighties, like the T-1000 cyborg in Terminator 2, the biomech style of tattooing was born, gaining popularity as it rode through the early nineties. We were living in a time when computer technology was expanding fast, artificial intelligence was the new buzz word and cyborgs, robots and androids were at the fore front of the media. It was a new future of half man, half machine and we all wanted in.

The biomech style suited this new era with it's mixture of organic or biological parts with man made parts such as iron, steel or even alien made futuristic metals. Imaginations were sparked and the style caught on quickly.

Biomech had people sporting steel arm bones, seemingly bursting out of their flesh, cogs and wheels instead of joints and alien flesh pulled back to reveal a clockwork mechanism pulsating underneath. The future had been imagined and tattooists brought it to life.

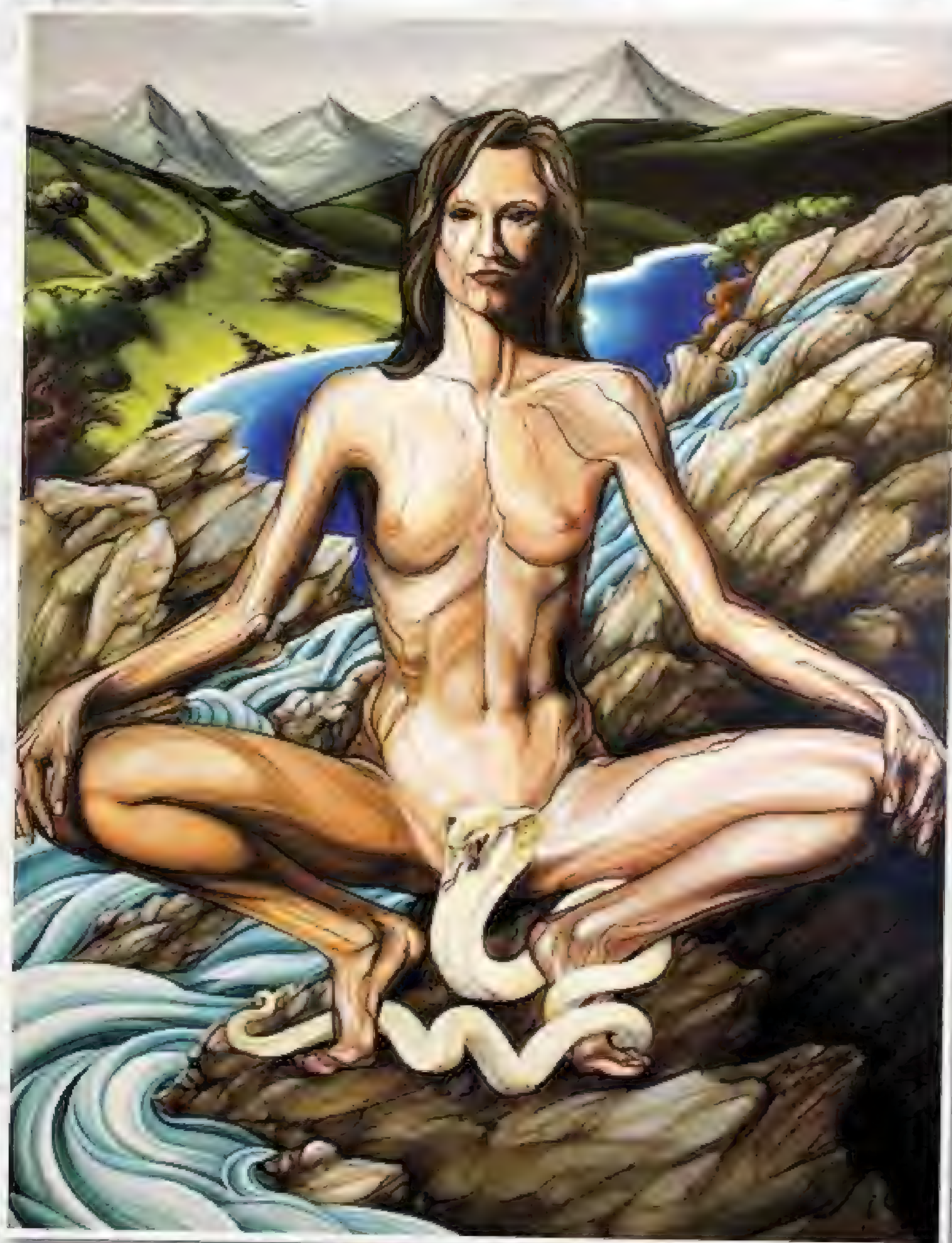
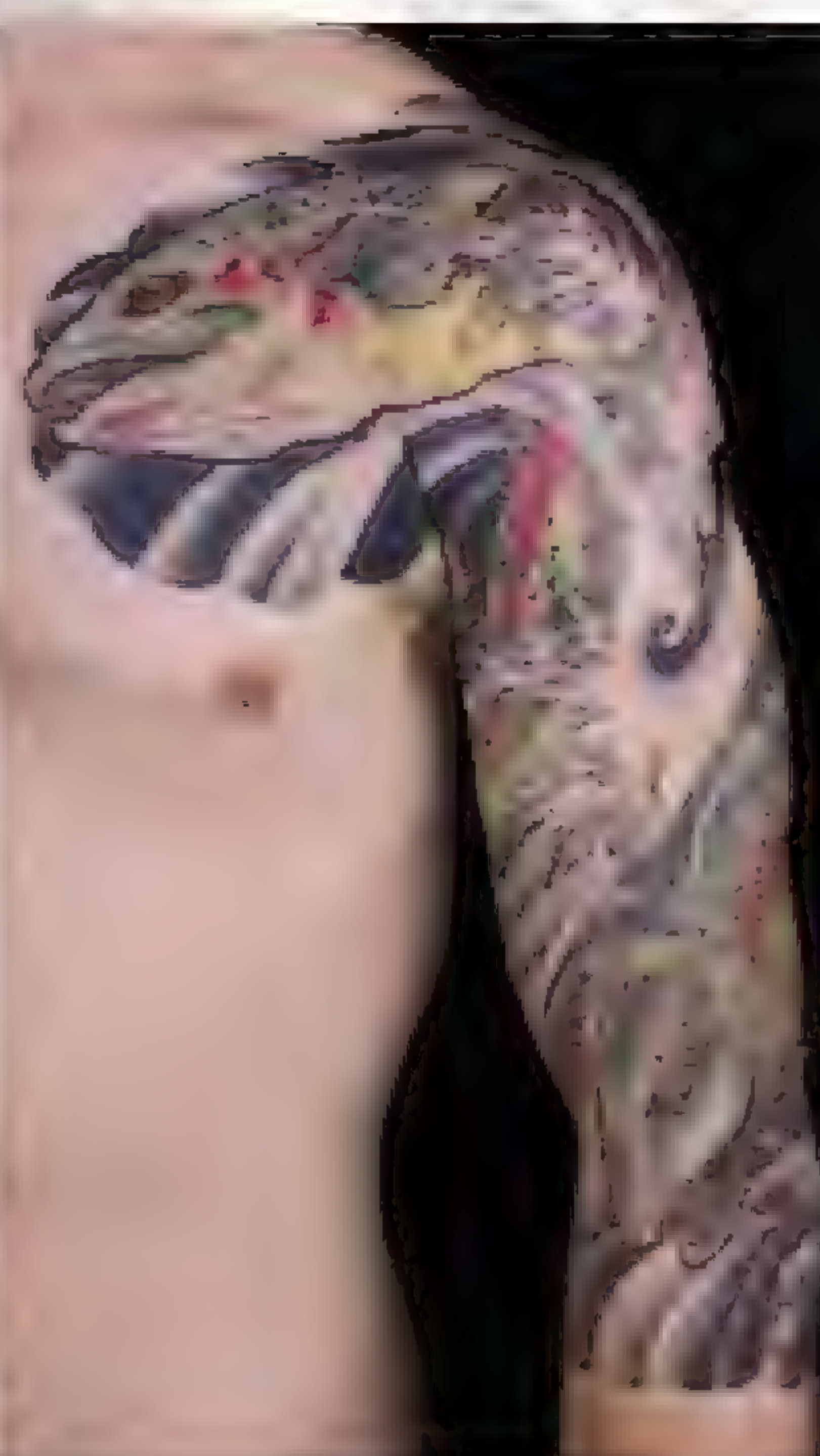
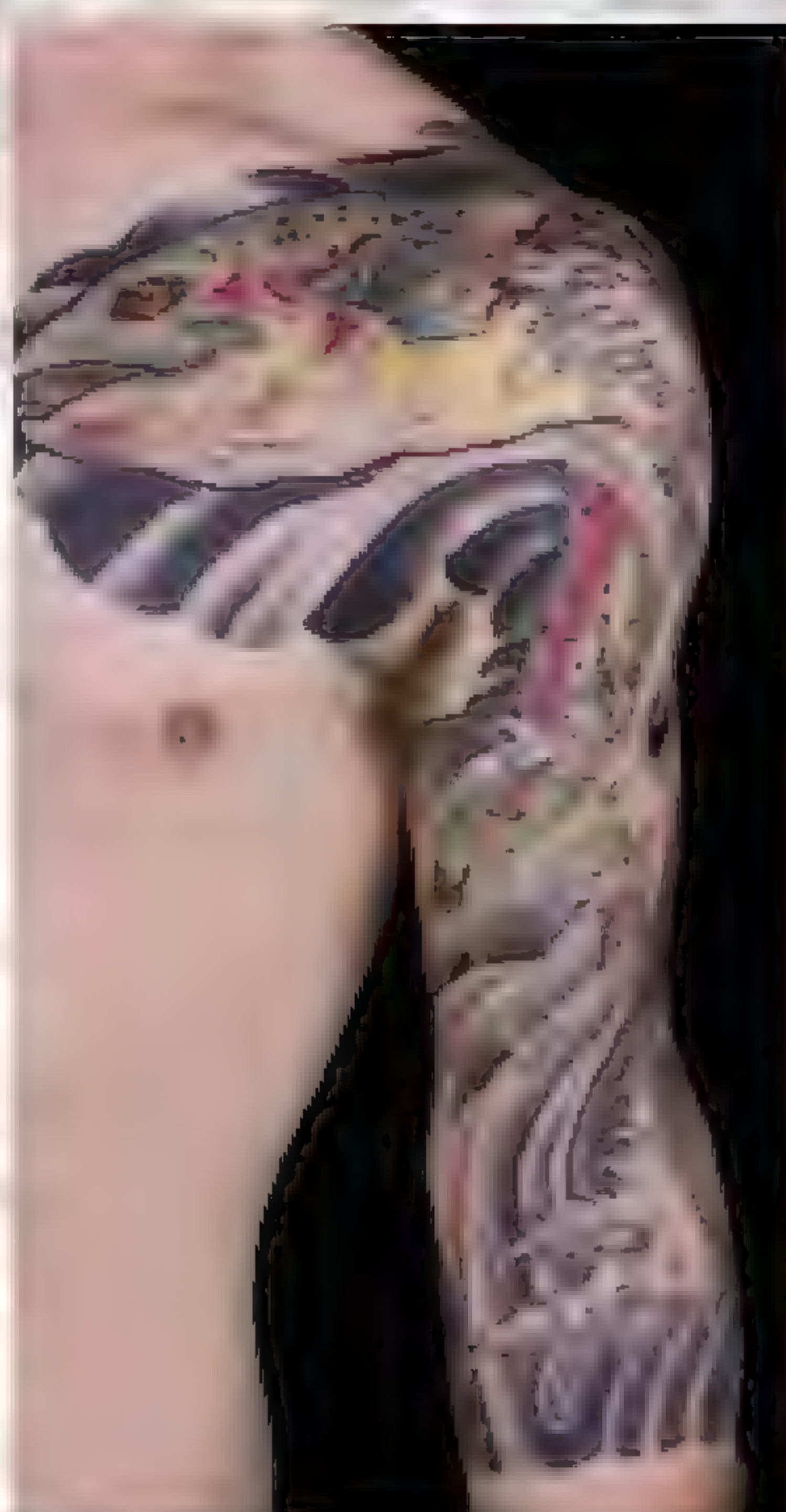
The difference between a biomech tattoo and a brilliant biomech tattoo is in subtlety. Shading and 3-D effects, combined with perfect placement, produce an effect of synthesis - the tattoo doesn't look like it is an added extra, it looks like it is part of the body. It is visual trickery at it's best when done right.

These days biomech is still huge. With cyber punk and graphic novels fuelling the fire, it's never been bigger or better.

friends. What makes it worse, is that I should know better, what with being a father and also part of the tattoo industry.

Feeling a little embarrassed, I let him continue. "I spend a lot of time with my kids and I do jujitsu when I can find the time. Maybe some fishing or kayaking but honestly, with four kids most of my "free" time is spent doing what a six-year-old wants to do. Jeez that sounds dull!" In the end, I am pleased with his answer, I think it suits Phil's personae better. It makes him seem more real, less of a caricature.

Throughout the interview with Phil, I get the sense that he is "old soul". Or maybe a "wise soul" would be a better way of putting it. He is quick to laugh or make a joke but the dedication and love of his craft always shines through. Though he takes his work seriously, he doesn't take himself or the business too seriously. A good quality that is often lacking in people these days. I think if Reid Daughtry were around to see Phil now, he would be proud of this young kid he befriended all those years ago. ★

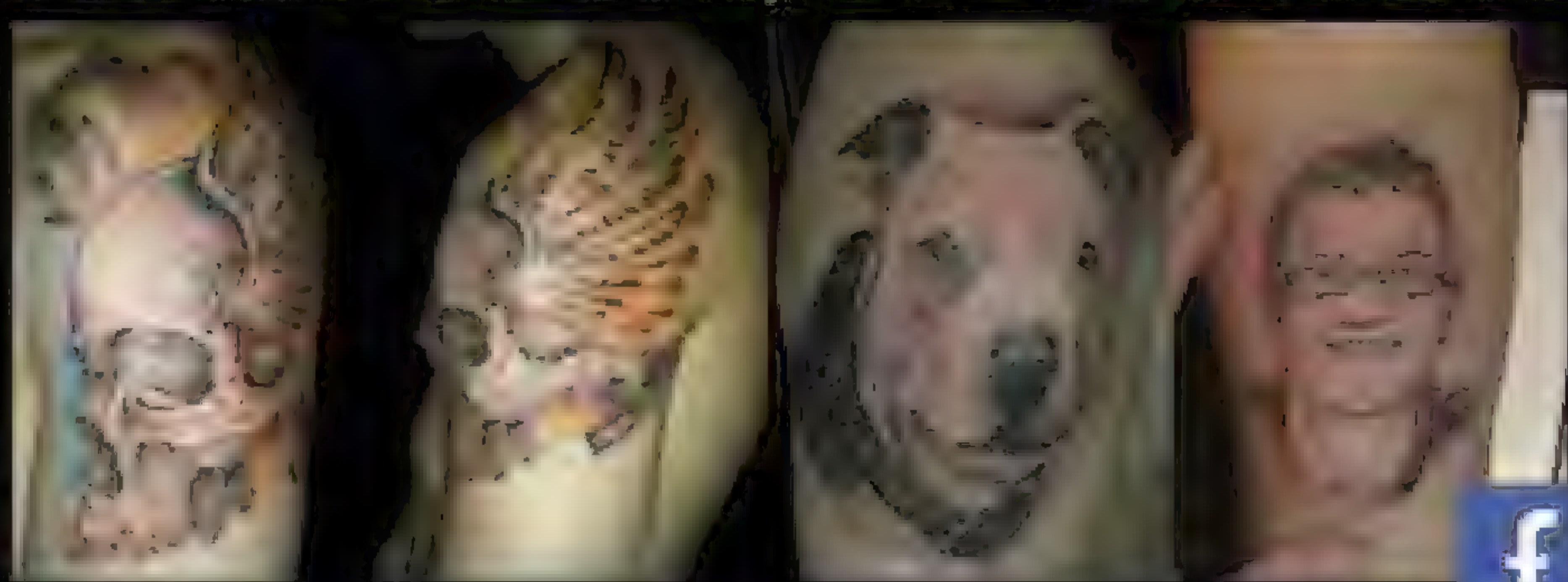


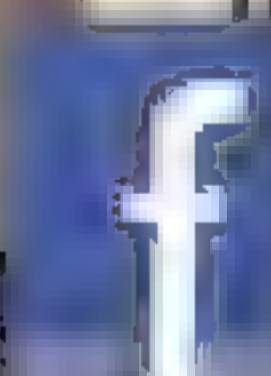


# TATTOOS

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# FREY'D AT THE EDGES

By now, the name Cindy Frey should be synonymous with tattoo aficionados the world over. Notorious for her self portraits and music photography, we recently got together to look over some of her recent work, talk about her never ending series of projects and just how she manages being such a successful loose cannon...



Cindy Frey is just about the most easy-going subject to interview – articulate, focused and with a lot to say – you couldn't ask for more so, kicking back against a potentially dark and dangerous Belgian sky, we scan through a host of books, mobile phone pictures and websites trying to figure out just how much she has accomplished in comparatively little time. What is clearly evident is that this is only the tip of the iceberg for her – is it possible to pick out something that gave more pleasure than anything else?

"My favourite project was my last book and expo, 'Come And Play With Us'. I love children, they are pure and innocent and I get along really well with kids. For this project, I put 78 kids in creepy scenarios but it wasn't easy to find ideas, clothes, backgrounds, locations and make-up for all the shoots!

I didn't want to repeat myself over and over again, so I tried to be as diverse as possible. I had a make-up artist Noortje who did the make up for 30% of the shoots, but all the others I did myself.

Photographers always say it's hard to work with kids, but I don't think so - you do need a lot of patience to get along

'My favourite project was my last book and expo, 'Come And Play With Us'. I love children, they are pure and innocent and I get along really well with kids.'



with them. I let the kids do their thing, played with them, followed them around, made them laugh and in the end made them act and then it's just up to you to stay focused and to snap the photos when you think it's the right time. The kids loved playing in the dirt, to wear the make up, to chase each other, to act like they were in a movie - kids have a lot of fantasy and you would be surprised to see how they come up with their own poses, ideas and expressions."

...and what of these others?

I don't want to go back to projects from the past, each project was valuable to me, the process of making it, the experience, the knowledge, the fun, being creative and the excitement of seeing it progress - it all means a lot to me and I'm proud of them all. I just want to keep doing new projects. I think my next one will be something with tattoos again - maybe a new book or exhibition. At the moment I have two exhibitions running, one in my town Kortrijk - all women portraits and another one in a gallery in Uden, Holland, which is a collection of my work."

You said in an interview some time ago that you lived your life like you were in a band - that it didn't really matter where you were as long as you were able to create your art. Is that still true more than ever or do you think sometimes putting roots down would be a good thing to do? ☺





I love to travel and meet people, share my art, make art, discover other art and music and experience new things, but when I get home, I like it too, it's just nice to come home after touring or traveling.

"I still think the same about it. I love to travel and meet people, share my art, make art, discover other art and music and experience new things, but when I get home, I like it too, it's just nice to come home after touring or traveling. Last year, I was home a lot because I worked on 'Come and Play With Us', that took me six months, but I missed traveling! So this year I want to be on the road again more often. It's also easy for me to do it because I'm single and I have no one that waits for me at home or complains that I'm gone a lot. It's lonely sometimes, but maybe one day I will meet Mister Right... if he exists!"

If Mister Right does indeed exist, he would need to be something else – perhaps not of this planet! Personally, I think the most suitable candidate would be in a band – quite possibly the only lifestyle that could sustain this sort of artistic pressure, because it's certainly not going away! I ask Frey if she's happy with what she has built so far and the



subjects that she's associated with – and even whether there are things still to add:

"I'm pretty happy with all these subjects, but I'm always open to expand and learn more, to improve, to discover new area's. I think it's also a challenge to expand. I want to move forward all the time, but it's not easy.

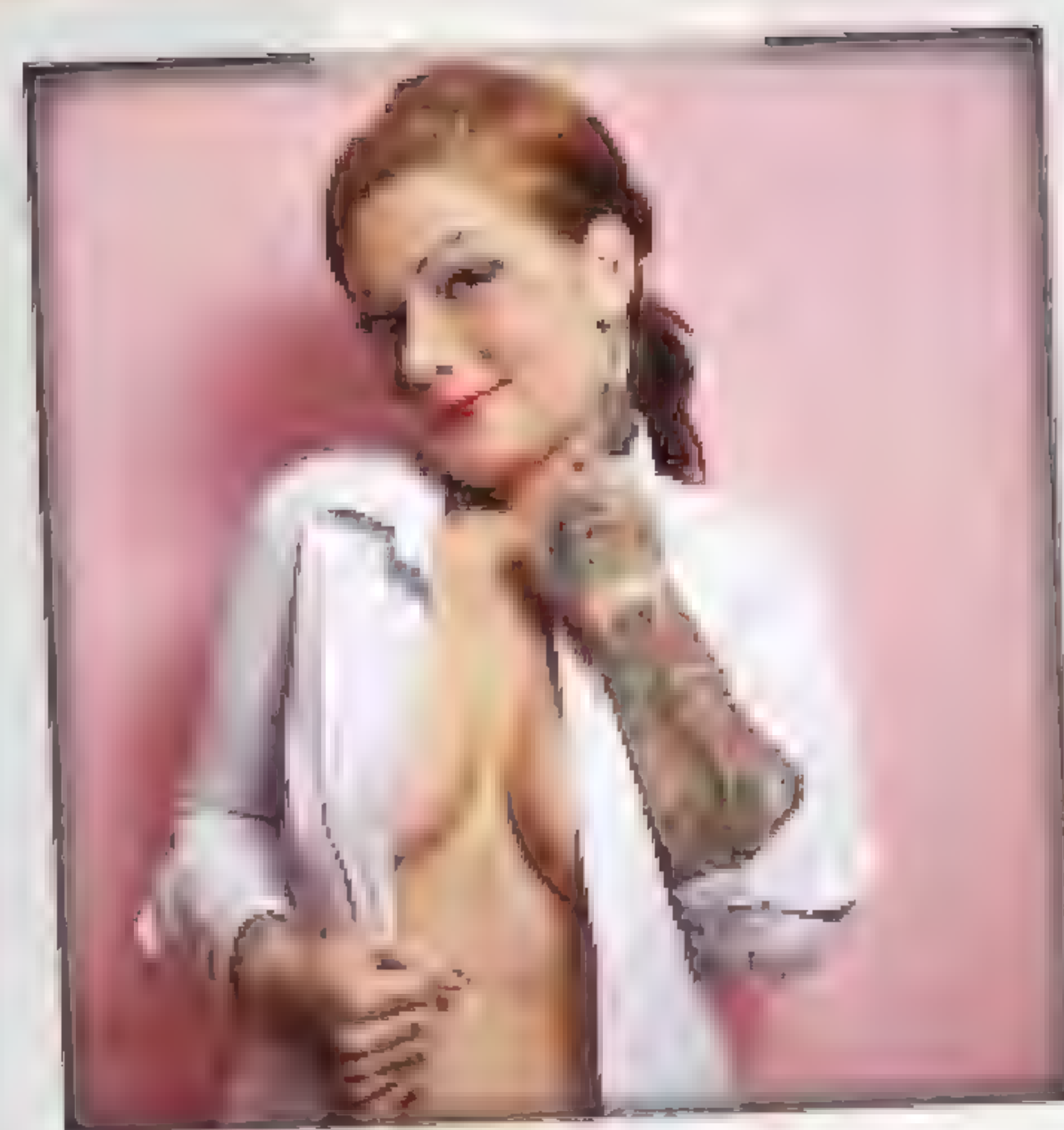
Last year I started shooting car racing, not the race itself, but the lifestyle around it - it was fun to experience this event, to see the passion and excitement for this car sport even

though I'm not a fan of the racing itself. I would love to be more involved into fashion photography though."

Is she her own worst critic? Very few are able to be at once happy with their own work when they do so much in isolation. I ask this simply because she makes it look so damn easy - and I know it's not...

"Yes, 95% of the photos of me are done by myself for covers, postcards, calendars, magazine features, portraits... I actually don't like modeling, which is hard to





believe for some people if they see my self portraits - they think I love it. Some people also can't believe they are all self portraits and that no one helped me.

It's funny - I'm very critical about my photos, I'm not easily happy, not about my looks but about the picture itself, I always see things that could be better, the lighting wasn't good enough, the camera angle wasn't right, its not sharp and crisp enough, the pose was too boring and so on... I try to learn from this and do it better next time. And no - its really not easy, it's much easier to shoot someone else, because you can really see what you are doing!

The good thing about shooting yourself without anyone around is that you can experiment very well, act silly, try things and no one will laugh. You feel totally comfortable, except of course when you do a shoot on the beach! Believe me, the people that pass by are looking very confused at me and my camera on the tripod, studio lights and no photographer - only a 'model!' I just act like I'm waiting for the photographer till they are gone!"

Although Cindy is totally self motivated and self propelled, she doesn't by any stretch of the imagination live in a bubble - so who are the people that inspire here and move her to better herself everyday?

"I don't really have role models or heroes, but I do respect some other

photographers a lot. I look at their work, at their achievements, at their art - it inspires me and it motivates me to get better and achieve more. I think it's good to see people who are better and way better than me, it keeps me sharp and it pushes me to keep going and do things. I have a few favourite photographers, one of them is Matthew Miller (he plays in Most Precious Blood) - [www.thefivemilegrace.com/photoblog/](http://www.thefivemilegrace.com/photoblog/), he is amazing, he captures so much energy and his photos are so beautiful, he has a great eye. Another one I like a lot is Marino Parisotto, he is a fashion photographer and Michael Muller is fantastic, I'm also impressed with some young talent like Joey Lawrence and Lara Jade.

You know, I will never find anything else that I will love as much as this. I photograph and make art with my heart,



You know, I will never find anything else that I will love as much as this. I photograph and make art with my heart, my enthusiasm for this is still huge.

my enthusiasm for this is still huge. My journey as a photographer/artist is an endless road, there won't be a day that you can say, 'I know everything, I learned everything'... there's no end, you can keep improving and discovering, new styles, new art, different ways of lighting, new ideas, new techniques, new cameras - you also never know what you will discover the next day or who will discover your work, what opportunities you will get, what new jobs are coming your way, what people you will meet, where you will travel to - I live day by day, I try to make the best of each day and then move on to the next. I don't look back or I don't look too far ahead either - you never know what will happen. I think it's exciting. Let's see what tomorrow brings. I'm ready!"

That sounds fair enough to me - everybody should live their life with that ethos, but that cold hearted Belgian sky that's been hovering above us for the past hour is threatening to unzip itself, so we agree that just this once, we'll take notice of what the future will bring and move inside... ★





WORDS RIK VAN BOECKEL  
PHOTOGRAPHS NOI SIAMESE

# NEW ORIENTAL OF NOI SIAMESE

**During the Amsterdam and Brussels conventions, the Thai artist Noi Siamese strikes the tattoo fans with tattoos which lie somewhere between old Japanese and new Oriental. Noi runs his studio 1969 Tattoo not in Bangkok but in Oslo where his unique oriental tattoos are characterized by clear and sharp colours and have already garnered him many awards:**



**N**oi originates from the south of Thailand, from Phang Nga near the popular holiday island Phuket but has lived for the past three years in Norway. "I called my studio 1969 Tattoo because I was born in 1969," he tells me. "It's a magic number with many 3's in it - I thought it would be a good idea to call my shop that!"

When Noi started tattooing 10 years ago in Thailand, he was also looking for a good teacher. "During this period when I lived in Phuket, Sid Siamese was the best tattoo artist in Thailand but he already had an apprentice. I became his second apprentice, so I am the third one in the

row, (therefore the number 3 behind my name) - Sid also had a studio in Karlstad, Sweden though and I had to wait for him because one month a year he went back to Thailand. When he stayed, I learned drawing and some tattoo techniques from him. Then he went back to Sweden and I had to wait again. My first tattoo studio was in Phuket."

The second he had in Kao Lak but he had to leave the place after the tsunami catastrophe in 2004. "Then I moved to Hua Hin," he tells me. "I stayed there for two years. I met my Norwegian wife there and moved with her to Europe. The first year, I stayed in Sweden with my master Sid and after that I opened my studio in Norway. That was in 2008. First I had a small studio like 13 square metres but it grew quick and in the last



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year, I've grown it into a studio of about 150 square meters."

## THE DREAM OF NOI

Noi learned the oriental style from Sid. "In the beginning I had to find my own style," he says. "Sid said to me that he wouldn't be happy that my tattoos look like his. It took time to develop my own oriental style but now customers come to me and say: Noi, you have your own style. This is my dream, I don't tattoo only for the money. In Thailand I had not many customers. I have to sit and wait for customers, in one week I had only one customer. I tattooed my cousin, I did it for free because I needed to learn. As an apprentice of Sid I had to draw a lot. At same time I practiced on pigskins, sometimes I practiced on myself. I had to keep my drawing ability alive when Sid went to Sweden, after he got back to Thailand I had to show him what I did. I am an apprentice to Sid still - he will be

my master my whole life, I would like to learn every day." Nowadays Noi has a waiting list. "I follow my dream, I get a lot of things from my dream because I work hard, 10 to 15 hours everyday," he says.

## JAPANESE AND ORIENTAL

According to Noi his style lays somewhere between old Japanese and new oriental. You can clearly see the influences of Japanese tattoos in his designs. Noi: "My tattoo work is not like the old traditional Japanese, it can have that form but in the details I use my own ideas, from my fantasy. The images are not derived from mythology. Most of my tattoo work I do freehand. My new oriental style looks more realistic. I use a lot of thin lines and very strong colours and I have a preference for green!" Noi mentions the name of the Japanese tattoo artist Shege. "He is the best from Japan, his tattoos look like paintings. Shege is my master, I learned a lot of him, but I

don't want to copy him, so my tattoo work is the total opposite of his style. I would like to keep something special for my work." When he started to tattoo in Oslo, Noi not only tattooed the oriental style but in as many as he possibly could. "From the beginning I did every style. I did oriental more than other styles but I didn't want to broadcast myself as an artist who specialized in oriental. Now that has changed and I only tattoo oriental designs. My customers are from Norway, Poland and England - I have regular customers because they love my style."

## FULL BODYSUIT

Noi himself is tattooed by another Thai artist, called Wat. "I got my first tattoo from him when I first started to tattoo and had my own shop in Thailand. I noticed that many people wanted small tattoos. I thought: 'why do you have to start with small tattoos?'. I like to have big tattoos, on my arms for example,☺

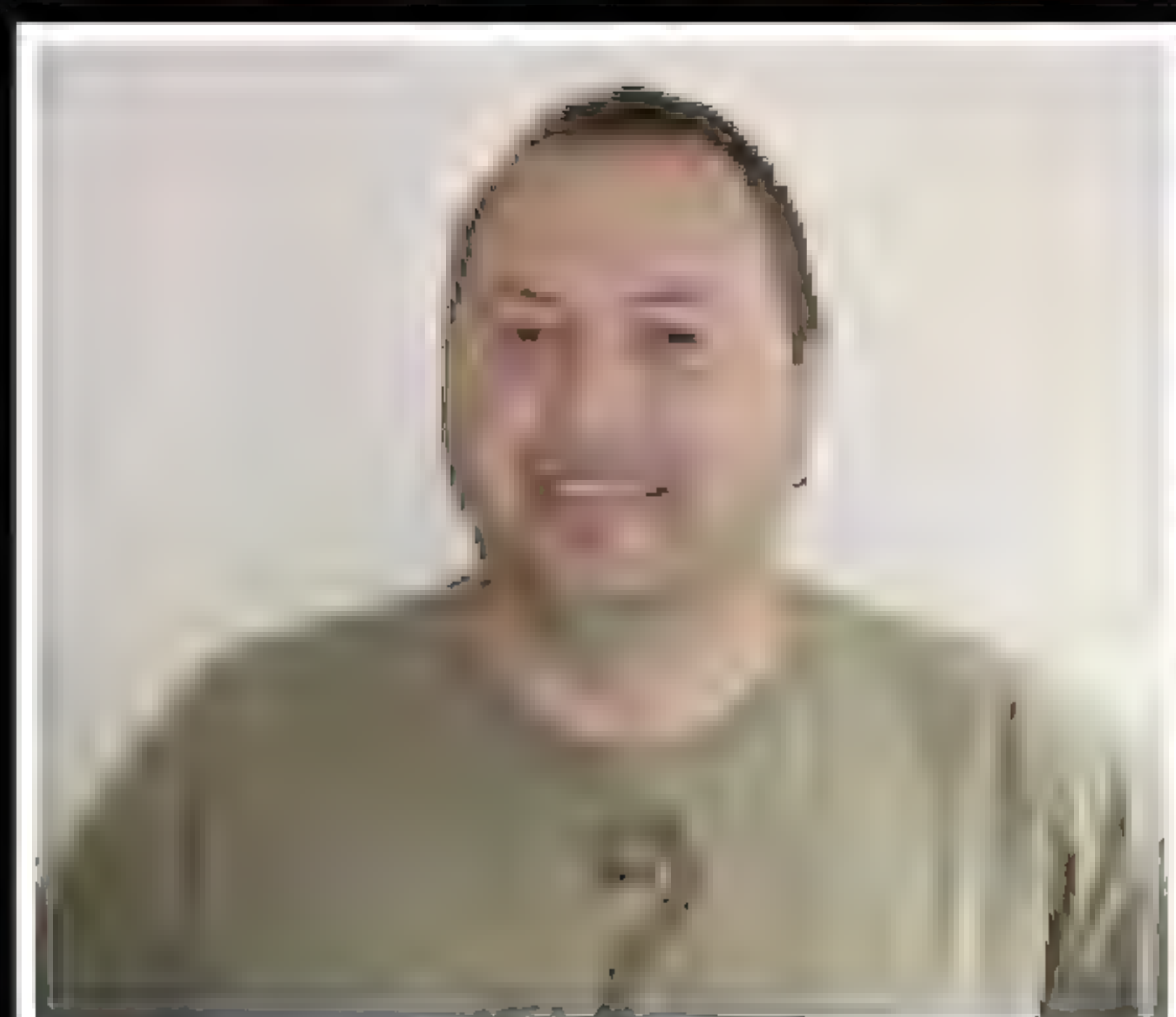




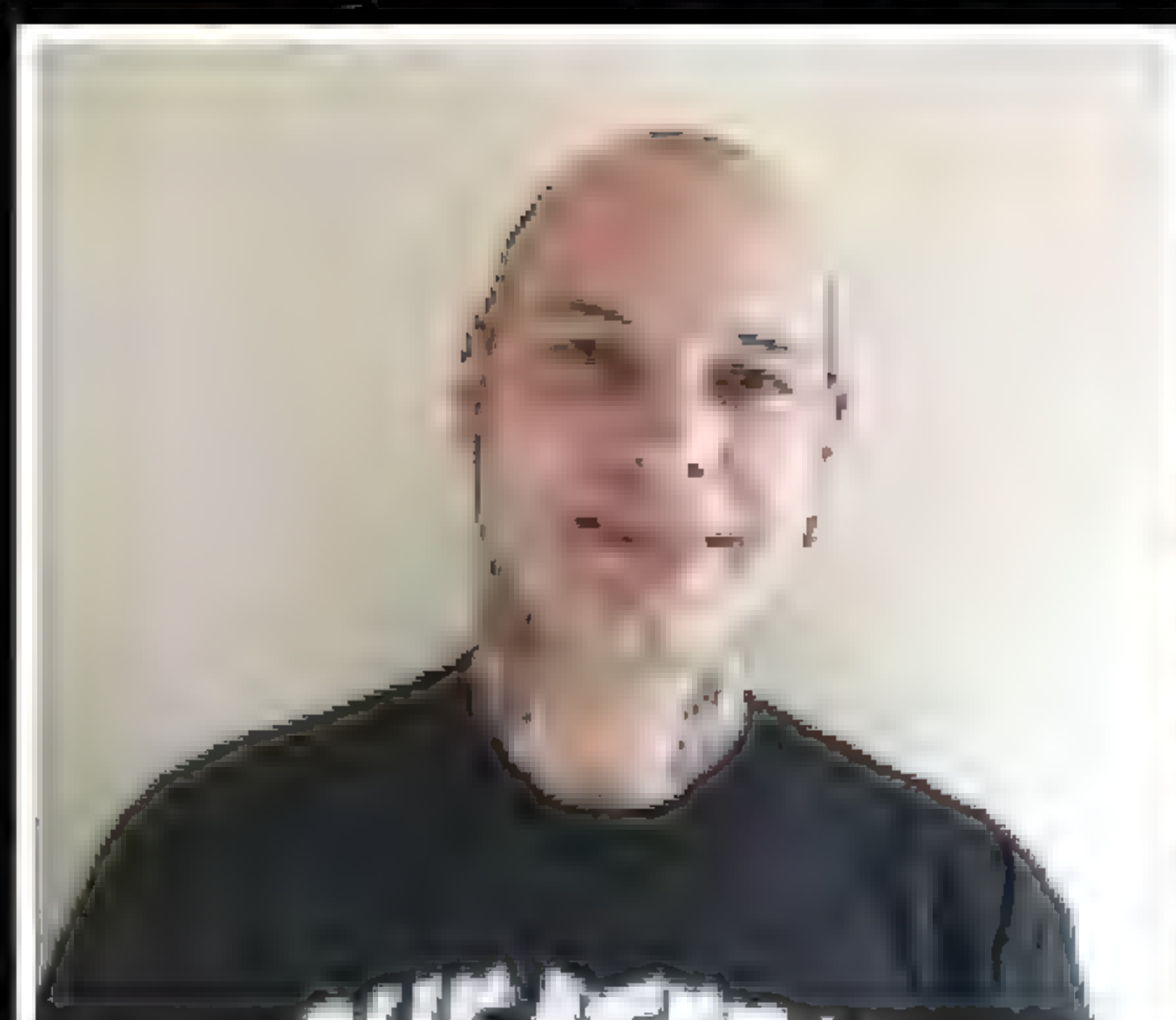
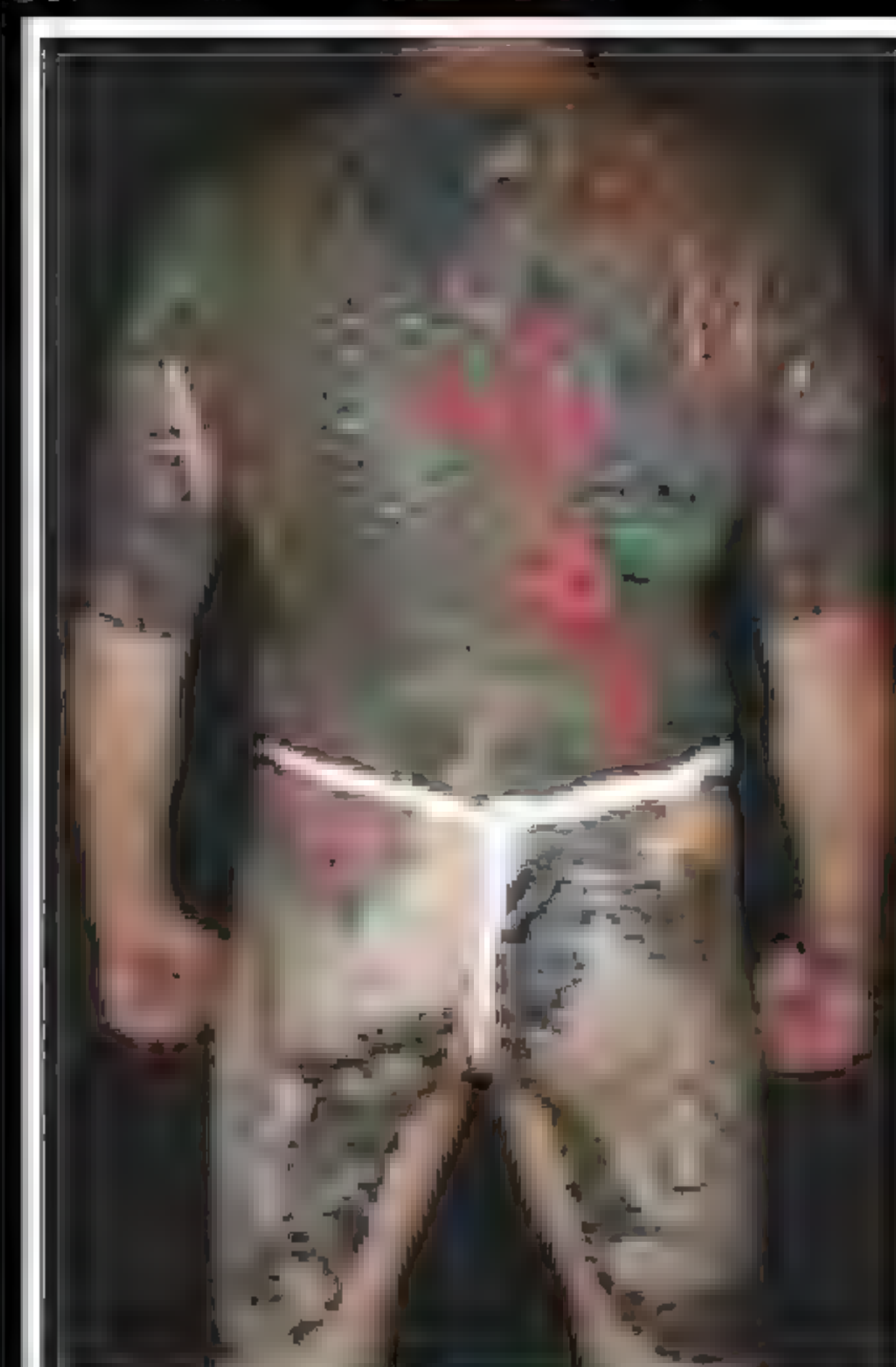


# CHERRY BLOSSOM TATTOO STUDIO

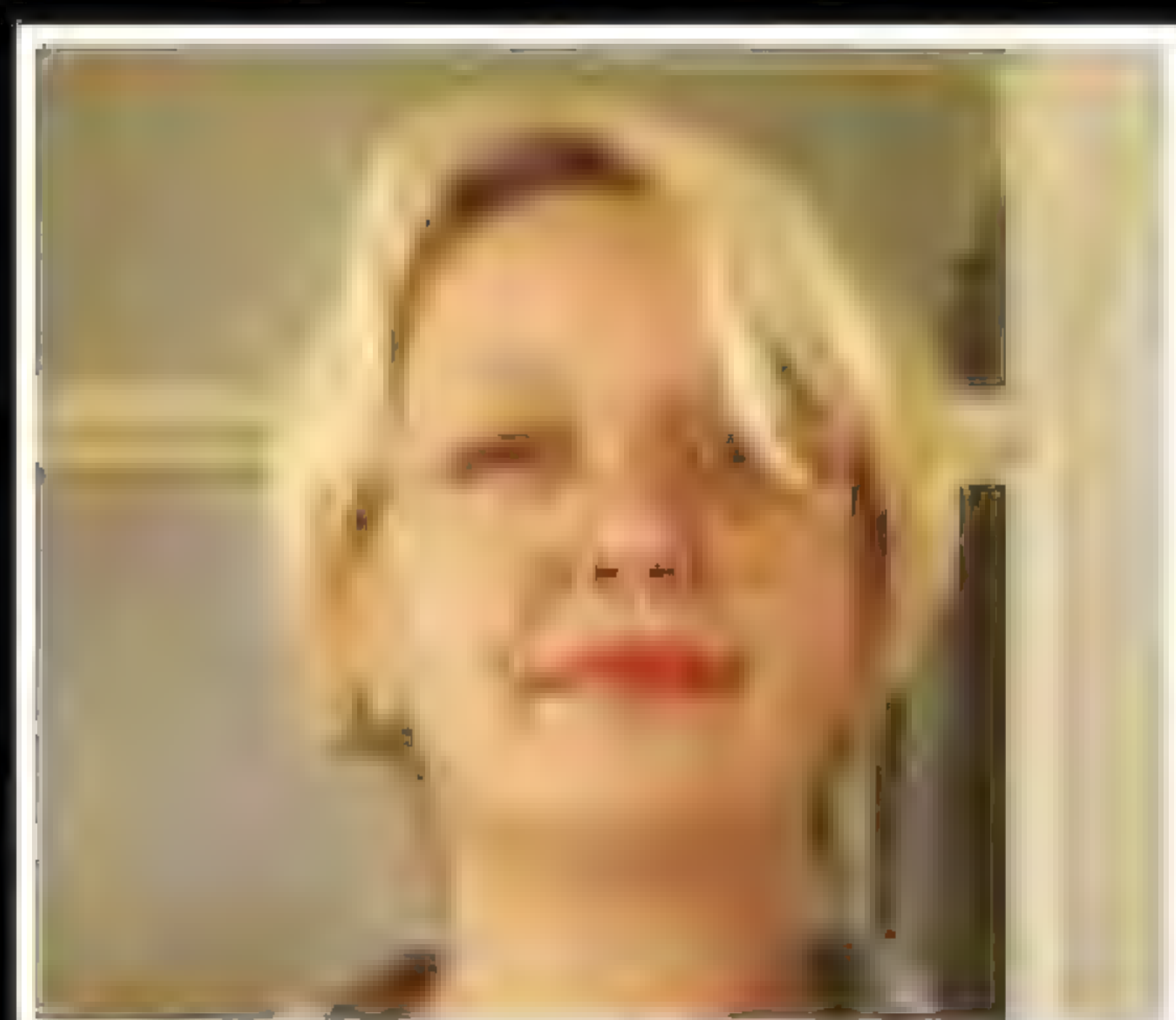
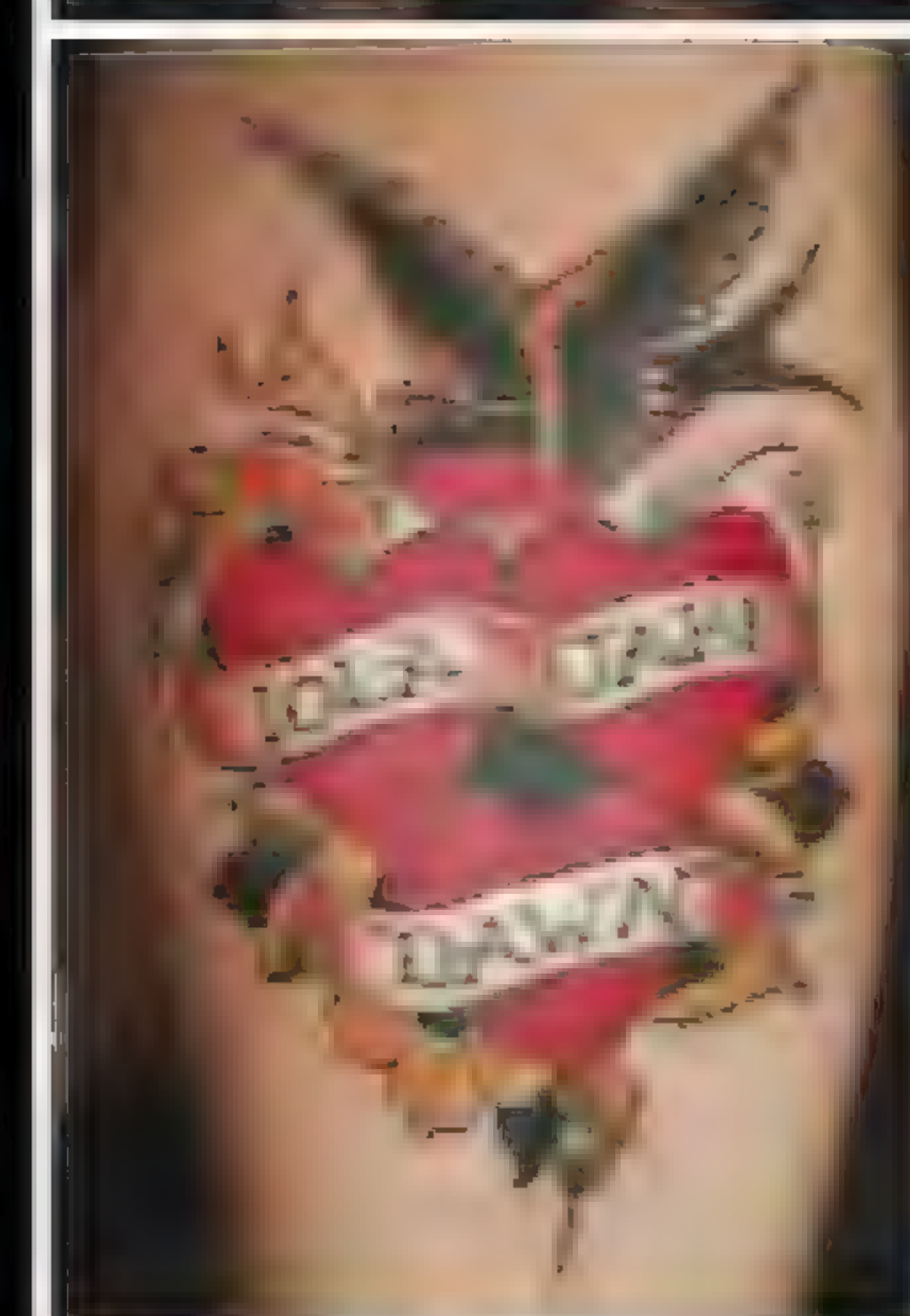
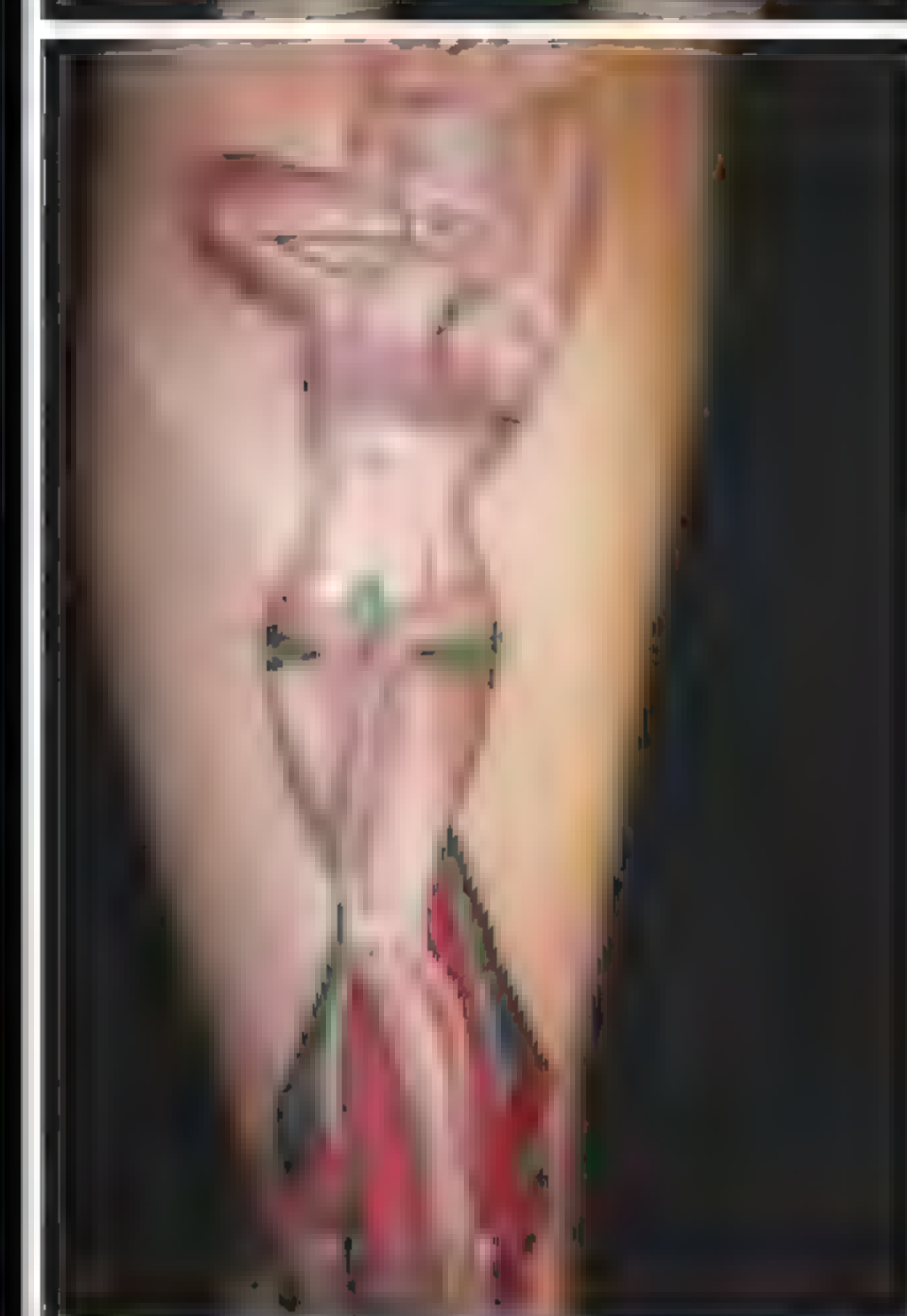
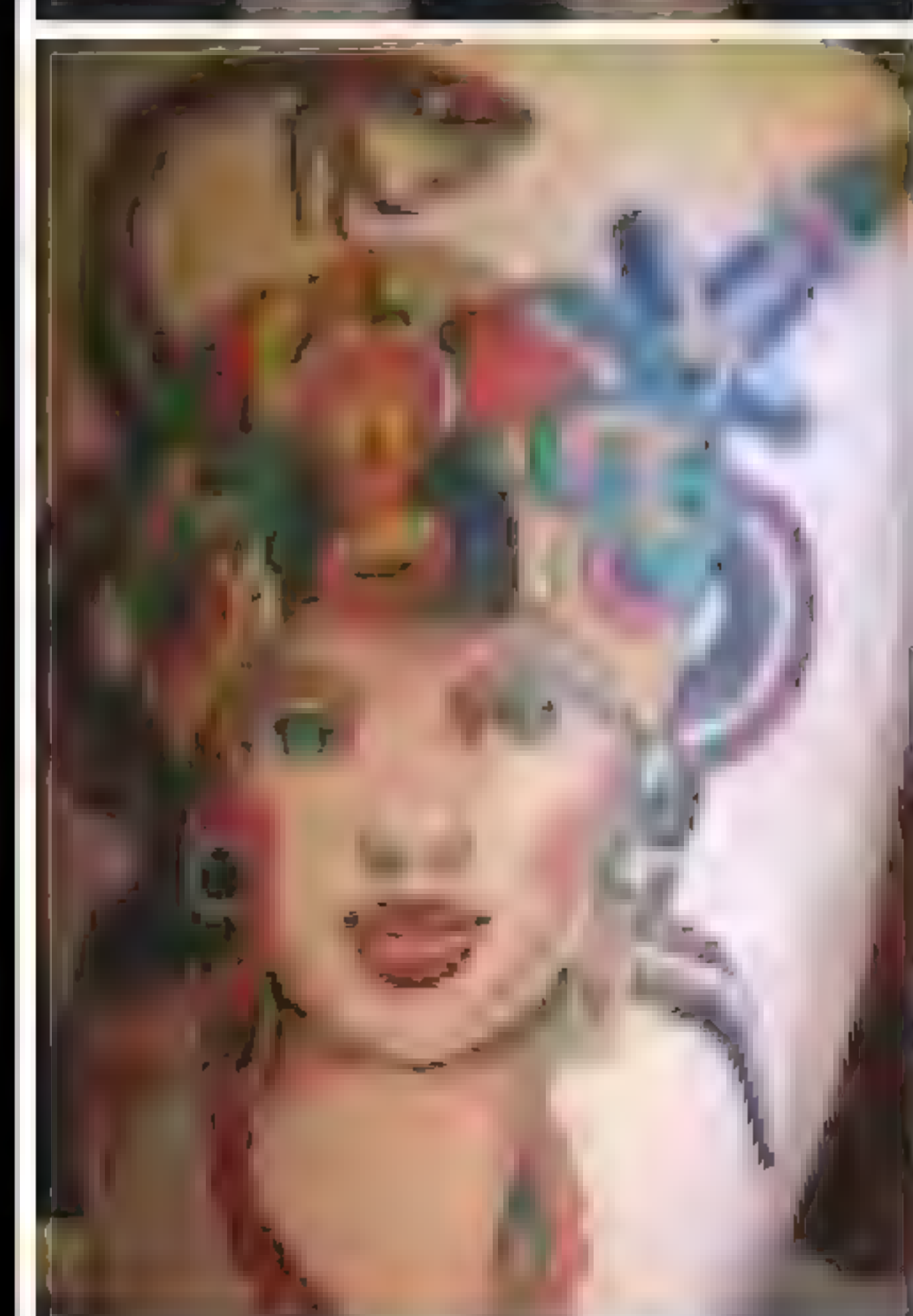
Home Of The Japanese Bodysuit In The UK



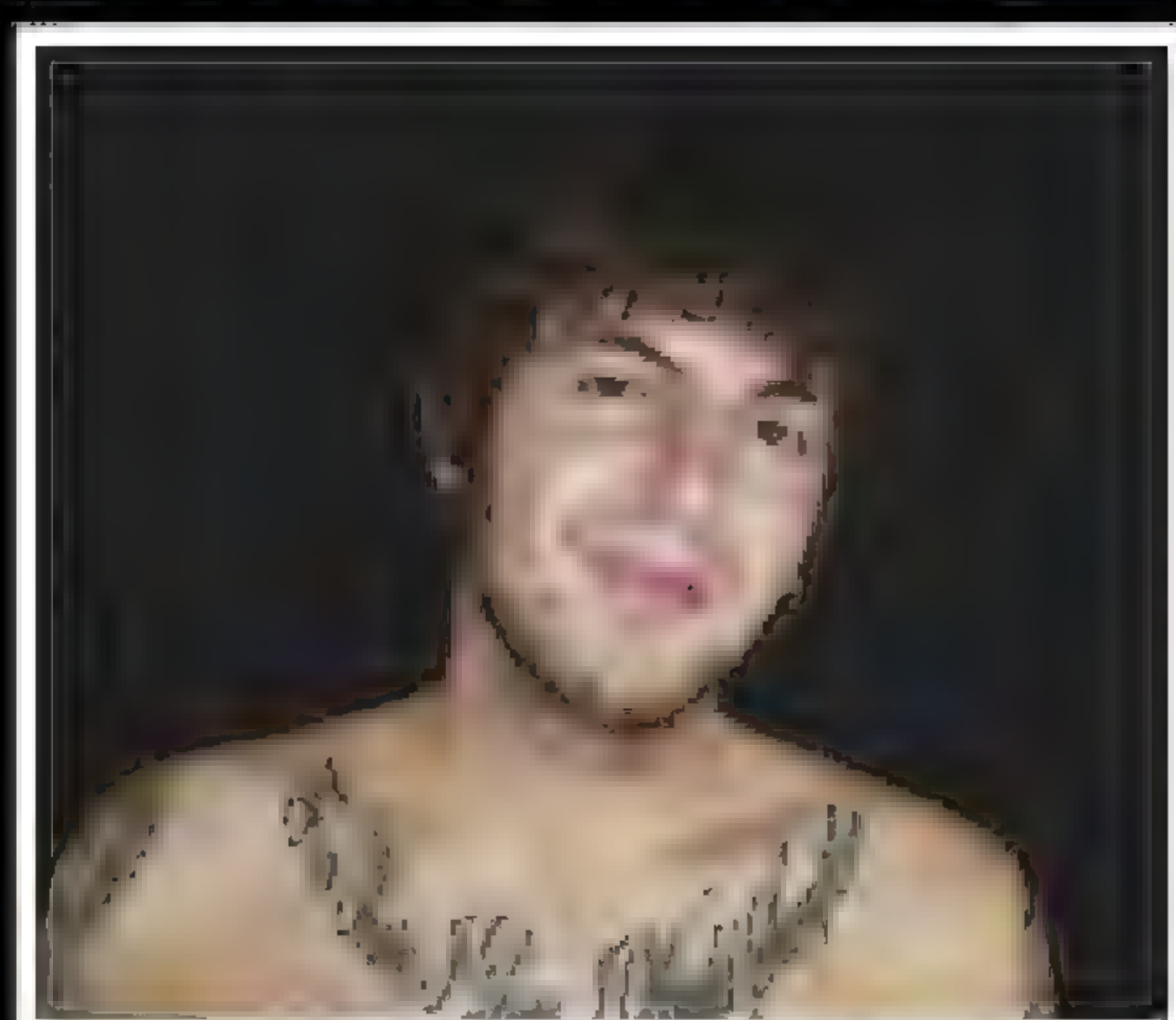
Japanese - Lee



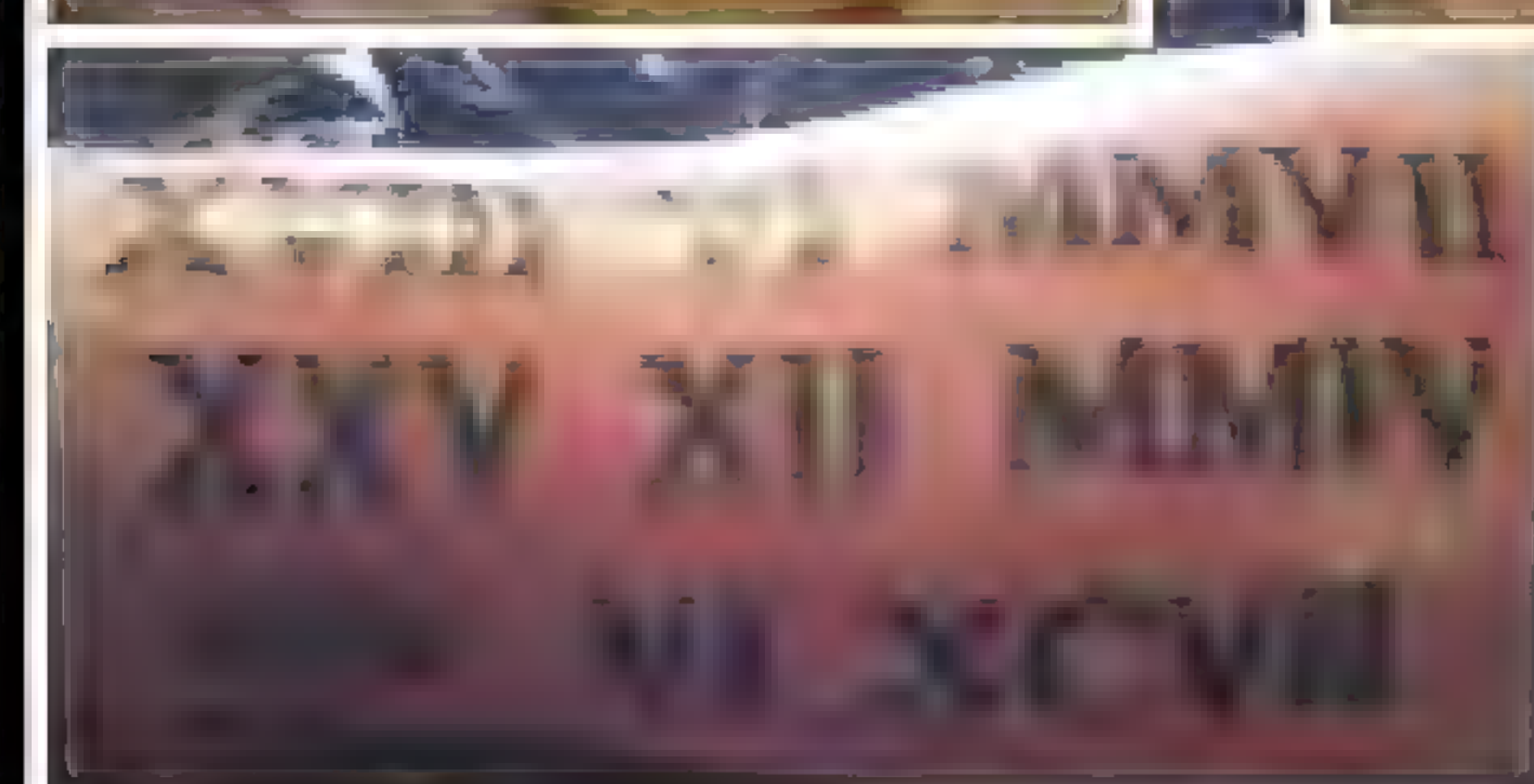
Traditional - Glenn



Portrait - Sarah



Lettering - Zac



Body Piercing - Hannah

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# REVIEWS

If it's a feast for the eyes and tattoo-related, you'll find it here under the microscopic glare of the review page.

Be they Books, DVDs or VHS are all welcome at Skin Deep where judgement shall be passed upon them...at the very least, we'll tell you if they're any good or not.



## IRON WILL

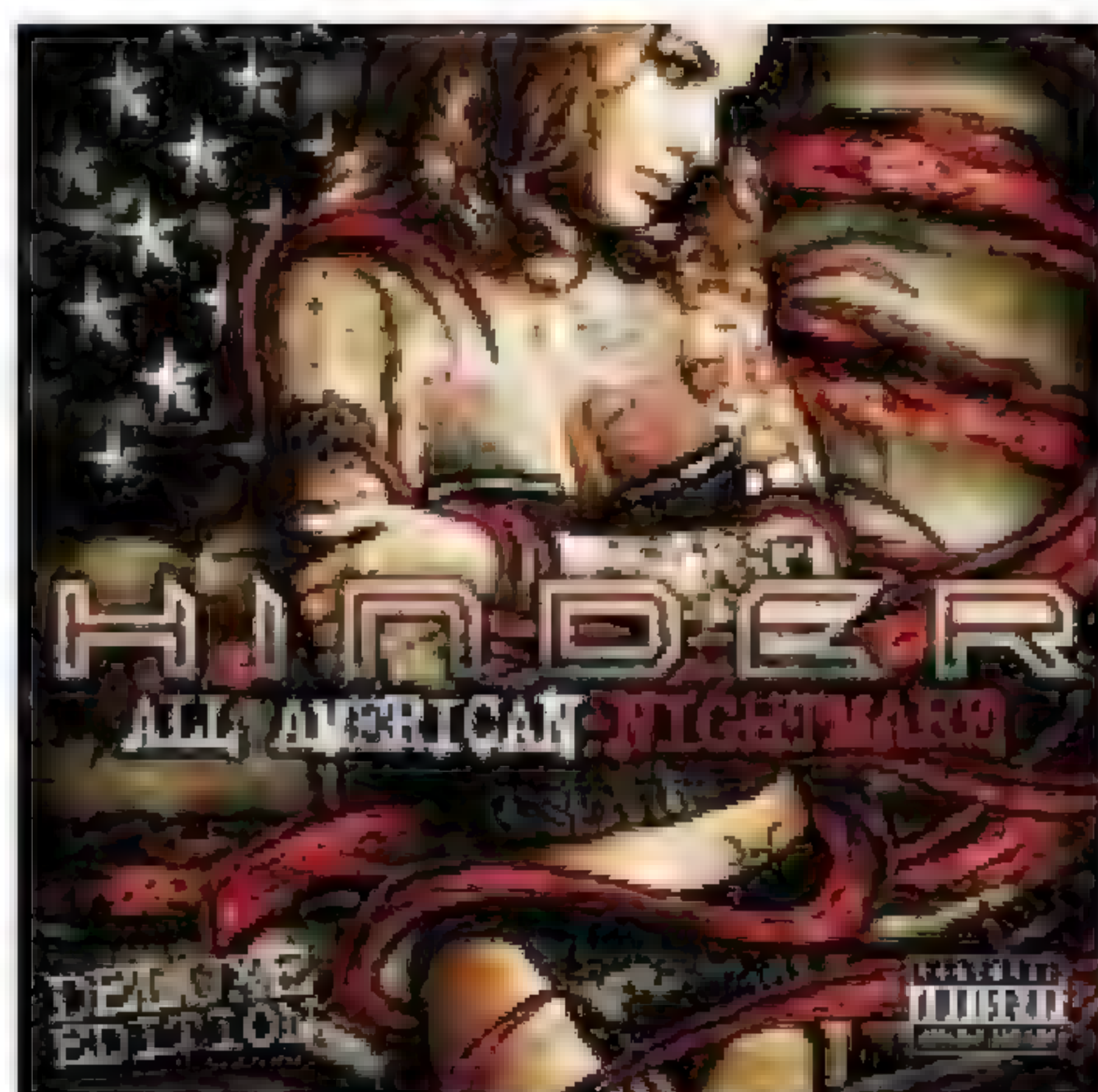
*Grime*  
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**Iron Will is packed with color images of Grime's stellar tattoo work, much of which he's previously kept private, as well as his sketches, artwork and personal photos. Your mailman may not be too happy having to deliver the impressive 384 page, 11.5 x 13 inch hardcover to your doorstep, but you'll certainly appreciate the justice the grand format does the images.**

Spanning the past eight years of Grime's life, *Iron Will* also includes numerous candid journal entries and I'm not talking mere filler; this is intimate, raw writing.

To make things even sweeter, Grime's sold-out debut book, *Two Year Autopsy*, has been trimmed by a few pages and turned into a softcover that accompanies *Iron Will* in its slipcase. The smaller, 112-page volume is just as visually gripping, but delivers even more journal entries than its follow-up.

Now, this may or may not have been intentional, but the honesty of the writings in both releases allows for a certain sense of relatability to form. Maybe it's just me, but the journaling, which deals with everything from artistic self-doubt to uncertainty with women to Grime's self-realized iron will, creates a deep-running connection between author and reader. One that warrants repeated cover-to-cover readings.



## HINDER

*All American Nightmare*  
Universal Records

Along with their contemporaries Nickelback, Daughtry, Theory of a Deadman (this list is potentially endless), Hinder have come in for some serious lambasting over the last couple of years.

Why? Because they're an American rock band who do exactly what it says on the tin - end of story. I'm not sure why this is such a crime in the media when so much garbage is put on such a high pedestal but sometimes - just sometimes - everybody needs something that does what it says on that tin.

*All American Nightmare* is as solid a slice of rock as you're likely to find this year. The title track is real strong, but it's not the be all and end all of the album - fact of the matter is, these guys ain't stupid. *Nightmare* has been put together by people who remember vinyl and it runs as flawlessly as *Slippery When Wet* did back in the day. Two distinct sides, plenty of big rock, a couple of radio friendly ballads and very little in the way of filler - it even has a couple of demo tracks tagged on the end that most bands would struggle to write as final material.

Sadly, in the UK, they'll more than likely need to sell their souls to a furniture advert in order to have any recognition of value but if you're looking for a slice of guitar driven rawk that you don't need to spend more than three seconds thinking about, you came to the right place. Don't forget the back catalogue on your way out of the door.



## THE CHILD THIEF

*Brom*  
Harper/Collins

For those who haven't read Peter Pan (self included), not only will *The Child Thief* come as a nice sting in the face for those expecting a tripped out version of the story, it may also make them consider hunting down the original given Brom's own research on the matter.

Original tale aside, *The Child Thief* stands alone as a deep, dark modern 're-telling' of the story we are all reasonably familiar with. Brom has created 'his' Peter as every parents worst nightmare (or perhaps, every bad parents worst nightmare would be more exact) and come up with a splendid otherworldly adventure that isn't afraid to call on a spot of paganism when necessary. As Peter and the Lost Boys take up arms to protect the forest they have grown to call home from strange interlopers of all kinds, the reader is called upon - at many levels - to decide on their own concepts of good and evil.

A word of warning perhaps - it's pretty rough here and there if you're of a big emotional pansy, but it's never gratuitous and always uses the harshness as leverage to take the story elsewhere. That said, it's a fascinating ride, an incredible tale and every home should have one! Try and pick up a copy of the hardback before it goes out of print with the beautiful colour plates bound in. Nice job everybody!



## FULL COVERAGE

*Nskolectiv*

No review section would be complete without looking at one of the high end art books that you can re-mortgage your house for - and this one is a peach. Originally released in 2006, this third edition is a welcome addition to the book shelf that's for sure.

A glorious black etched cover packaged in a protective cardboard sleeve always bodes well for a book - it means somebody cares and what's gone on in the external packaging reflects exactly what's going on inside. The point of the book is to illustrate the journey of eight tattoo artists as they adorn their subjects with bodysuits.

Full colour throughout, there are images of the final work, close ups on the detail, journalistic images of the works in progress and at no point does it ever become boring and truly tells the story of what both parties go through in the conceiving of a bodysuit. As we can all imagine, there's no small amount of thought goes into a suit. To capture it on camera must be an absolute labour of love and respect for what the artist is creating, thus, we must namecheck Max Dolberg here for his commitment in bringing the images of the book to life.

Seriously, even somebody with not the slightest interest in tattoos would find this fascinating. If you can get your hands on a copy, I would do it now. They won't be reprinted forever. New copies are currently available at a crackdown price on [amazon.co.uk](http://amazon.co.uk) (£51 at time of writing).



## CLASSIFIEDS

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**BUSY CITY CENTRE** shop in Norwich. Are looking for a new tattoo artist to join our team due to expanding our studio space. Must have at least two years shop experience and portfolio. We do alot of custom work and welcome specialising artists and artists that are good all rounders. We are looking for a friendly, laid back hard working tattoo enthusiast to join our growing business. For info contact [gemma\\_indigo@yahoo.com](mailto:gemma_indigo@yahoo.com) or call 07988695339 or the shop on 01603 886 143

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**TATTOOIST WANTED:** No Regrets in Cheltenham are looking for a new apprentice to join their multi award winning team. Applicants must have a excellent portfolio and attitude as well as good customer skills. We are looking for something exceptional so if you think that might be you then please send a portfolio and your details to [ben\\_jakn@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:ben_jakn@hotmail.co.uk)

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MY COLUMN THIS  
 MONTH IS DEDICATED TO

# SHONE DAVIS, 1973-2010

**When a painter sells a work of art, the ownership transfers to the buyer and it is clear to whom that painting now belongs. The buyer can display it or store it and often must insure it against theft or damage, for it is their painting.**



Paula Hardy Kangelos

**A**uthorship is quite separate to ownership and no matter where that painting may go the author is always the artist, indeed, the painting can even be sold on again and with that the ownership will change, ownership can be said to be in a state of flux.

In these terms, tattoos are quite a different form of art to paintings- we know that a painting can exist without ever going to a recipient, but the tattoo cannot be without its owner, it cannot exist. To be the wearer of a tattoo, an enthusiast or a collector is to be both a necessity and a privilege; we are required for the tattoo to be and also honoured as its owner.

The painter cannot become friends with the canvas, they do not share thoughts and they are not equal, nor does the canvas decide what is to be painted upon it. So the tattooee and the tattooer share a special relationship, one of implicit trust, as each and every time the tattoo curator acquires a new exhibit for the collection a leap of faith must take place, to deliver one's skin, one's body, into the hands of another who will mark it indelibly requires faith. Just as we trust our lovers not to break our hearts, we trust our tattooers not to alter us into persons that we do not recognise; rather, we trust them to bring our vision alive. To make our outsides align more closely with our insides.

To be a tattoo collector is to curate a gallery like no other, to buy your object of desire is not enough, you must also endure whatever it takes to receive it, blood is shed, we must give up our blankness in creation and to endure this,

we must have belief.

Shone Davis embodied everything a serious tattoo collector requires, his enviable collection of tattoos featured work from some of the brightest artists on both sides of the Atlantic and included Phil Kyle, Tin-Tin, Hori Toshi II and Mike Dorsey.

Shone's hometown of Cincinnati, Ohio, boasts Kore Flatmo of Plurabella Tattoo and it was here that Shone worked before moving to the UK to become a founding member of the crew at Magnum Opus Tattoo, Brighton.

The loss of Shone is devastating, not just to his friends, colleagues and customers, but also to those of us who perhaps knew him only as a fountain of tattoo knowledge or as the go-to man, organizing appointments and ironing out annoyances, as someone with which to eat a really big sandwich or indeed as a source of endless amusement.

Shone's profile on the community forums at bigtattooplanet.com declares him to be raised by Ninjas and lists pizza as an interest, so no one that knew him could've doubted he was special, he had an uncanny talent with soft toy claw machines, a ninja related T-shirt company and had once taken 4th place at the World Beard and Moustache Championships.

Each and every one of us that has chosen to adorn and decorate our skins with permanent art is one of a kind; we are creative, brave and strong, we have belief. We are special, Shone was special.

That tattoo world is now sporting a Shone shaped hole.

There are many reasons that I



have chosen to dedicate my little corner of Skin Deep to Shone this month but the biggest one of all is that without him, I would have no column. I met Shone at the London Tattoo Convention, 2006 and previously to that first face-to-face meeting we had shared an online correspondence. In that medium I had told him of my fascination with another of Ohio's children, the last wooden boat on the Mississippi River, the Delta Queen. And so, to the convention 2000 miles from Cincinnati Shone brought a scale model of my favourite paddle steamer.

Later on, I wrote a story about that model boat, my first story and here I am – in a fleeting moment of random generosity, Shone set me on a path that led me to writing for real.

I'm a collector, just as Shone was and his absence recalls to me how closely our tattoos are tied to our own mortality, how permanence isn't really so because we measure it not in forever but in human life spans and although there has been a historical precedent for preserving tattooed skin, without the personality that instigated them, they will never be as interesting.

Shone has gone and with him he took the spark that made his collection and himself, so cool.

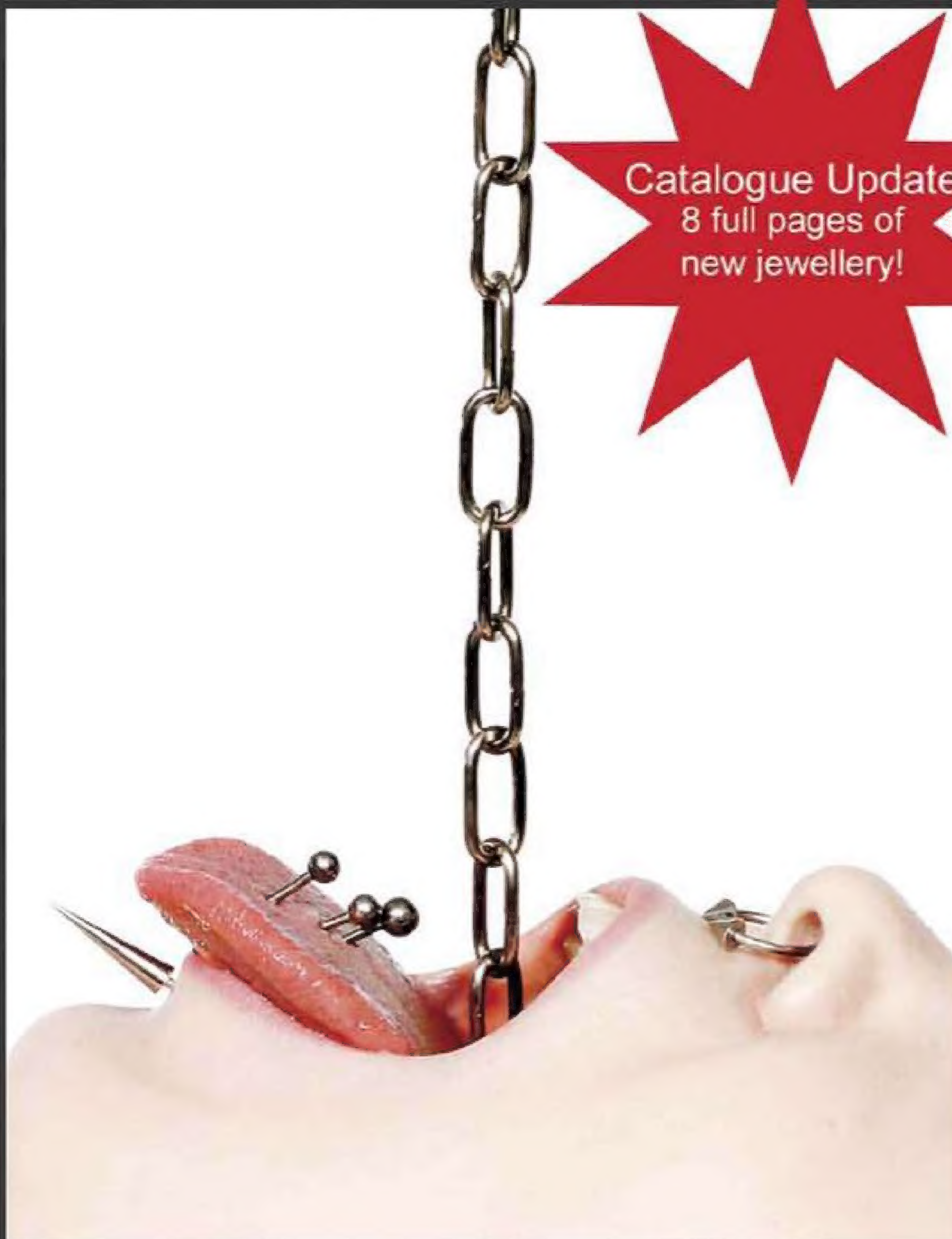
Goodnight and Shine on, Shone.★





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